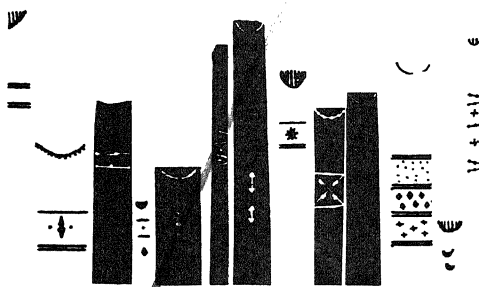




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*THE YALE EDITION*

OF

HORACE WALPOLE'S

*CORRESPONDENCE*

EDITED BY W. S. LEWIS

H. Walpole

*VOLUME TWENTY-NINE*



HORACE WALPOLE'S  
CORRESPONDENCE

*WITH*

WILLIAM MASON

II

EDITED BY W. S. LEWIS

GROVER CRONIN, JR

*AND*

CHARLES H. BENNETT

NEW HAVEN

*YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS*

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*The two volumes of Walpole's correspondence with Mason have been numbered 28 and 29 in order that the correspondence with Mann may be in continuous series from volumes 17-19. At the present writing, it is expected that there will be seven more Mann volumes, but an allowance has been made to provide for a possible miscalculation.*

*June 1955*



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# HORACE WALPOLE'S CORRESPONDENCE

TO MASON, Tuesday 4 January 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 61-3.

Jan. 4, 1780.

I ALWAYS perceived a striking resemblance between you and Milton:—

I thought so once but now I know it<sup>1</sup>—

why, you are an agitator, a sequestrator,<sup>2</sup> and one of the committee of safety,<sup>3</sup> one does not know to treat you with reverence enough. I would write to you with my hat off, if I ever put it on;<sup>4</sup> and therefore could only do as my namesake uncle did, who being met walking near The Hague<sup>5</sup> by the Spanish ambassador on a proud Isabella<sup>6</sup> jennet, who descended to make a bow, the latter said he could not return the compliment unless Don Guzman<sup>7</sup> would lend him his horse that he might mount, dismount and make his obeisance. Poor Mr Smelt:<sup>8</sup> how one may hurt a man by serving him.<sup>9</sup> I like your committee's thanking the barons for their appearance,<sup>10</sup> which was a very civil way of marking the impertinence of their intrusion. They would have made a party-affair of what was the result of feeling for the distresses and disgrace of the nation, but alas! here is the nation plunged deeper still. Yesterday came an express from Captain Field-

1. 'Life is a jest; and all things show it.  
I thought so once; but now I know it'  
(John Gay, *My Own Epitaph*).

2. I.e., a confiscator of estates.

3. A committee that typified the violent measures of the Parliamentarians to whom Milton gave his support. Mason was a member of the committee to carry on the necessary correspondence to accomplish the redress of grievances and to prepare a plan of association (Wyvill, op. cit. i. 5).

4. HW 'never wore a hat' (*Walpoliana* i. p. xlv).

5. The older Horace was in the Netherlands on various diplomatic missions 1709-11, 1715-16, 1722, 1733, 1734-7, and 1739 (D. B. Horn *British Diplomatic Representatives 1689-1789*, 1932, pp. 159, 161-4).

6. 'Greyish yellow; light buff' (OED).

7. Presumably Don Jaime de Guzman (1689-1767), Marqués de la Mina; Spanish ambassador to France 1736-9 (Alfred Baudrillart, *Philippe V et la cour de France*, 1890-[1901], iv. 359, 545; D. Manuel Juan Diana, *Capitanes ilustres y revista de libros militares*, Madrid, 1851, pp. 260-1). Since he seems to have held no diplomatic post at The Hague, he was apparently visiting there, or HW may have mistaken the locale of the story.

8. In *Mem. Geo. III* (iv. 207) HW gives a favourable account of Smelt's character.

9. Smelt's speech at York, interpreted as a reflection of the King's sentiments, caused great resentment towards the King.

10. The letter is printed in Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 41-2.

ing,<sup>12</sup> who has brought a Dutch fleet into Plymouth,<sup>13</sup> and yet has missed his aim, which was to seize stores going to the Brest fleet essential to its re-equipment.<sup>14</sup> Those requisites were masts and timber, instead of which he has only captured hemp and iron.<sup>15</sup> Whether the more material articles have escaped, or have not yet ventured out, I do not know;<sup>16</sup> nor do I relate the particulars of the rencounter, which I have heard variously related, and which seem to have consisted of ceremonious salutations by the mouths of cannon rather than hostile attacks.<sup>17</sup> No sooner do we breathe in Ireland<sup>18</sup> than we open a new tempest with Holland; is it possible that we should not sink in this ocean of troubles? you who are so sanguine and spirited, have you any hopes of England rising again? I who have lately passed so many solitary hours of pain and reflection, see no distant ray of recovery. In vain that selfish uncomfortable question occurs, 'What is it to thee, poor skeleton, what is the future fate of thy country? the churchyard at Houghton will not be narrower than it is.' Still the love of that country, of its liberty and prosperity will be uppermost, and grief for its fall, and as there is little left for me, but to sit and think—but you are not in so despondent a mood, and you shall have no more of my meditations, I will change the theme. Some foolish friend, who by the way cannot measure a verse, has published some paltry poems of the last Lord Lyttelton,<sup>19</sup> that appear genuine, and

12. Charles Feilding (b. between 1738 and 1743, d. 1783), grandson of Basil, 4th E. of Denbigh; captain, Royal Navy, 1760–83. For an account of his career see John Charnock, *Biographia navalis*, 1794–8, vi. 391–3; Collins, *Peerage*, 1812, iii. 279; CM 1783, liii pt i. 94.

13. 'Extract of a letter from Portsmouth, Jan. 3. . . . "This morning arrived at St Helen's, Commodore Fielding, with seven Dutch merchant ships, laden with hemp, iron, cables, pitch, ropes, and tar"' (*London Chronicle* 1–4 Jan. 1780, xlvii. 16). The merchantmen were conveyed to port by five ships of war (*Sandwich Papers* iii. 11).

14. Feilding's instructions with regard to Dutch ships suspected of supplying France with naval stores are printed in *Sandwich Papers* iii. 10.

15. The Dutch acknowledged carrying hemp and iron, the sale of which to an enemy was not prohibited by the existing treaties between Holland and England, but

denied carrying timber, which would have been a violation of the treaties. See *London Chronicle*, loc. cit., and *Sandwich Papers* iii. 113–4.

16. Feilding also was uncertain, as is shown by his letter to Sandwich of 31 Dec. 1779 (*ibid.*).

17. After both squadrons had fired warning shots there was an exchange of broadsides, but the Dutch then struck colours. No damage seems to have been reported. See *ibid.* iii. 11.

18. '27th [Dec. 1779]. Arrived two votes of the House of Commons of Ireland expressing, *nem. con.*, satisfaction with the act passed here for their free trade, and gratitude for the friendly disposition of England' (*Last Journals* ii. 260).

19. Publication of *Poems by a Young Nobleman of Distinguished Abilities, Lately Deceased* was announced in the *Public Advertiser* 31 Dec. 1779. HW's copy was bound in his 'Poems of George III' (now in

discover no parts, which I have long believed he had not. There is a prefatory defence of his character, the badness of which the officious editor<sup>20</sup> comprises in the love of women and gaming;<sup>21</sup> and which were virtues compared with his other faults.

My hand has written its dose and must repose. I have not seen Lord Harcourt these ten days, so probably shall soon, for I do not yet go abroad. Do you mean to hatch all your eggs in the north, and have you abandoned your intention of coming to town?

### TO MASON, Monday 17 January 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 63-6.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 17, 1780.

NO disparagement to your political labours for saving a state that cannot be saved (for I look on the death-bed repentance of a nation as I do on that of a simple mortal), I had rather have written one line about a watch,

that tick-tacks obstinately right,<sup>1</sup>

than have cleansed the Augean mews. I do not mean to exhort you to do nothing but describe the movements of watches and clocks as long as you live, like the mechanic who made the serpent in *Orpheus and*

the Harvard Library) and has his notes throughout.

20. Wilson Aylesbury Roberts (fl. 1760-80) of Bewdley, Worcs; Lyttelton's literary executor. See N&Q 1853, 1st ser., viii. 32; H. Sydney Grazebrook, *The Heraldry of Worcestershire*, 1873, ii. 463-4.

21. 'His Lordship was passionately devoted to the pleasures arising from a commerce with the other sex, which, and his love of play, are the two grand crimes from which the fertile invention of his numerous libellers have produced a variety of inferior offences, with a view to blacken and defame his character' (*Poems by a Young Nobleman*, p. ii).

1. From Mason's satirical poem, *King Stephen and His Courtier: A Moral Tale*, which Mason sent in manuscript to Harcourt 8 Jan. 1780. It was printed anony-

mously in the *Yorkshire Freeholder* 3 Feb. 1780, reprinted in the *London Courant* 30 March 1780, and subsequently published in 1782 with the title *King Stephen's Watch, a Tale Founded on Fact*, 'by the author of the *Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers*' (*Critical Review* Nov. 1782, liv. 396; Gaskell 30-1). Smelt, the object of Mason's satire, 'had a present of a watch from his gracious master [the King], about which he boasted "that he had never altered the hands since he received it, and never meant so to do, as it had been set by the royal personage who gave it him;" this he said several months after he received it, and when it was at least four hours wrong' (Mason to Harcourt 8 Jan. 1780, *Harcourt Papers* vii. 63). HW's quotation is paraphrased from l. 77 of the poem (*ibid.* vii. 66).

*Eurydice*,<sup>2</sup> and ruined himself by making nothing but serpents of all sizes till he was in the Fleet.<sup>3</sup> As little do I mean to depreciate the *one line's* twin brothers and sisters—no, had it as many as the Countess of Holland's issue,<sup>4</sup>—but one perfect line as brilliant as Pitt's diamond<sup>5</sup> can efface a jeweller's whole shop; and I suppose that in Mahomet's paradise every true believer will fling his handkerchief to one of the houris in preference to all the rest. This is my case, and next to the one line I am delighted with the universality of your talents (excepting that one for idleness) and I admire how you can by turns play on all instruments, whether lyres, celestinettes, or country gentlemen, and make harmony out of them all. You might be organist to the spheres, for you make Whigs and Tories, and *high cathedral-men* (a better word than *churchmen*), and Presbyterians move in concert,<sup>6</sup> though as distant as Saturn and the moon—stay, I should have inverted the order of my planets to make the application more just; for though grim Saturn's belt and satellites strike one at first as proper accompaniments to an allusion to high cathedral-men,

2. The pantomime by Lewis Theobald, produced by John Rich, apparently first acted at Covent Garden 12 Feb. 1740 (Genest iii. 618). See Richard Foster Jones, *Lewis Theobald: His Contribution to English Scholarship with Some Unpublished Letters*, New York, 1919, pp. 27–30.

3. 'The principal performer wanted on this occasion was a serpent to kill Eurydice—Rich was justly anxious about a point of so much consequence, and an ingenious artist answered his most ardent hopes—the artist was intoxicated with his success, and turned his hands and head to nothing else but serpents—the public curiosity was satisfied with one serpent, and he had nests of them yet unsold; his stock lay dead upon his hands, his trade was lost and the man was ruined, bankrupt and undone' (Genest iii. 618–9, abridged from *Memoirs of Richard Cumberland*, 1806, pp. 473–4).

4. Margaretha, wife of Herman, Count of Hennenberg, and daughter of Floris, Count of Holland and Zeeland, on Good Friday in the year 1276, at Loosduinen near The Hague, supposedly gave birth to 365 children, as the result of a curse placed upon her by a poor woman whose fidelity to her husband the Countess had

doubted. Van der Aa surmises that the Countess may have actually given birth to twins on Good Friday, since in the 13th century the year began with Easter and the Countess would thus have borne as many children as there were days left in the year (A. J. van der Aa, *Aardrijkskundig Woordenboek der Nederlanden*, Gorinchem, 1839–51, vii. 434–5; John Ray, *Observations . . . Made in a Journey Through Part of the Low Countries* [etc.], 1673, pp. 29–30). Sir Thomas Browne mentions the story in *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, Bk VII, chap. ii. HW refers to the story in his letter to Mann 30 April 1762 and to Hannah More 20 Feb. 1790.

5. The famous diamond bought in India for some £25,000 by Thomas Pitt (1653–1726), governor of Madras and grandfather of Lord Chatham, and purchased from him in 1717 by the Duc d'Orléans, Regent of France, on behalf of the French government, for £133,000. See Sir Cornelius Neale Dalton, *Life of Thomas Pitt*, Cambridge, 1915; J. H. Plumb, *Chatham*, 1953, p. 10. HW referred to it throughout his life: see MONTAGU i. 2 and BERRY ii. 4.

6. Mason was chairman of the committee meeting at York at the session of 14 Jan. 1780 (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 52).



yet I must give the preference to the moon as still more consonant to the character of *mother cathedral*, which adheres to the earth as its centre, and only moves round the sun in compliment to and in company with her sovereign.

I have received all your journals with gratitude, and can distinguish where you have *smelted* and refined the materials; but I find I am in a very rhapsodical, that is nonsensical, mood, and therefore I will try to be a little more sober, though your Aganippean water<sup>7</sup> gets into my head and makes me as drunk as the royal beautifying fluid has made a poor deputy mentor,<sup>8</sup> though only outwardly applied.

I have no news for you but the shocking death of Hans Stanley,<sup>9</sup> who, in a sudden fit of frenzy went out of the house at Althorpe<sup>10</sup> last Thursday, and cut his throat in the public road, as his father did in bed with his wife.<sup>11</sup>

There is a Dutch savant<sup>12</sup> come over who is author of several pieces so learned, that I do not know even their titles,<sup>13</sup> but he has made a discovery in my way which you may be sure I believe, for it *proves* what I had suspected, and hinted in my *Anecdotes of Painting*, that the use of oil colours was known long before Van Eyck.<sup>14</sup> Mr Raspe the discoverer has found a MS of one Theophilus,<sup>15</sup> a German monk in

7. Aganippe, a spring on Mount Helicon sacred to the Muses.

8. Smelt. See *ante* 31 Dec. 1779, n. 4.

9. Hans Stanley (ca 1720–80), diplomatist and politician; M. P. St Albans 1743–7, Southampton 1754–80; P.C., 1762; governor of the Isle of Wight 1764–6 and 1771–80; chargé d'affaires, Paris, 1761; envoy to Russia, 1766; cofferer of the Household 1766–74 and 1776–80.

10. Where he was visiting Lord Spencer. HW gives a more circumstantial account of Stanley's death in his letter to Lady Ossory 17 Jan. 1780.

11. George Stanley (d. 1734), who married (1719) Sarah Sloane (d. 1764), dau. and coheirress of Sir Hans Sloane, died by his own hand 31 Jan. 1734 (DNB).

12. Rudolf Erich Raspe (1737–94), German-English writer and mineralogist, author of *Baron Munchausen's Narrative of His Marvellous Travels and Campaigns in Russia*, 1785. He had been (1767–75) curator of the collection of antiquities and coins of Friedrich II, Landgrave of Hesse, but becoming implicated in a theft he had

fled from Germany and settled in England (1775). See John Carswell, *The Prospector, Being the Life and Times of Rudolf Erich Raspe, 1737–1794*, London, 1950, pp. 86–131.

13. They are given in Carswell, pp. 262–6.

14. '... The inscription I have mentioned and some other circumstances seem to leave a doubt whether John ab Eyck was really the first person who mixed his colours with oil' (*Anecdotes, Works* iii. 30). Jan van Eyck (ca 1390–1441), Flemish painter, and his older brother, Huybrecht or Hubert van Eyck (ca 1366–1426), are traditionally credited with the discovery of the technique of modern oil painting. HW's scepticism of the tradition dated at least from 1760, when he first mentioned his doubt in *Questions Proposed to the Society of Antiquaries*, printed at SH (Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 172–5; see DALRYMPLE 145 and n. 26).

15. Possibly a German who wrote, at the latest, in the first quarter of the twelfth century (D. V. Thompson, Jr, 'The *Schedula* of Theophilus Presbyter,' *Specu-*

the eleventh century, who gives receipts for preparing the colours. There are copies of this work written in infernal Latin, in the libraries at Wolfenbottle and Leipsick,<sup>16</sup> in the King of France's,<sup>17</sup> and two at Cambridge, which Raspe has transcribed.<sup>18</sup> He has found too a like treatise of one Heraclius.<sup>19</sup> They are very much in the manner of Salmon's works.<sup>20</sup> Raspe writes in English, much above ill, and speaks it as readily as French; and he proves that Vasari<sup>21</sup> on bad or no information, was the first who ascribed the invention of oil painting to Van Eyck an hundred years after his death.<sup>22</sup> Raspe is poor, and I shall try to get subscriptions to enable him to print his work,<sup>23</sup> which is sensible, clear and unpretending.

Pray read a little book<sup>24</sup> no bigger than a silver penny, called a

*lum*, 1932, vii. 207-9) but about whom nothing else is known. Raspe discovered at Cambridge two MSS of his *Schedula diversarum artium* (ibid. 199-201; HW to Dalrymple 11 Dec. 1780, DALRYMPLE 145 and n. 23).

16. The MS in the Wolfenbüttel ducal library was discovered ca 1774 by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing and collated by him with a MS in the Leipzig University Library that had been noted by Joachim Feller in 1686 (Thompson, op. cit. 200).

17. Described by Thompson, ibid. 219.

18. Raspe was not allowed to publish the more extensive of the two MSS (now Cambridge University Library MS 1131). That which he used in his *Critical Essay on Oil Painting*, 1781, contains only the first book of the *Schedula*, and is now in the BM (Egerton 840A). See Thompson, op. cit. 201, 215-6. HW's census of the MSS needs to be supplemented by Thompson's article.

19. *De coloribus et artibus Romanorum*. Nothing certain is known of the author. See Albert Ilg's introduction to his edition and German translation of the text, Vienna, 1873.

20. William Salmon (1644-1713), apothecary, quack, and writer; author of *Polygraphice, or the Arts of Drawing, Engraving, Etching, Limning, Painting, Washing, Varnishing, Gilding, Colouring, Dyeing, Beautifying, and Perfuming*, 1672. HW's copy, ed. 1701, was sold SH iii. 29.

21. Giorgio Vasari (1511-74), Italian artist and art historian, best known for his

biographies of Italian artists, the *Vite de' più eccelenti architetti, pittori, e scultori italiani*, 1550.

22. Vasari's most circumstantial account of Van Eyck's invention is in his life of Antonello da Messina, who brought the technique to Italy. For a critical study of Vasari's account, in which it is demonstrated that he was actually discussing an improved method of oil painting and not merely the employment of oils in painting, see Sir Charles Lock Eastlake, *Materials for a History of Oil Painting*, 1847, pp. 201-68. 'The occasional ambiguities in Vasari's language, and his errors in date, leave the main facts unimpaired. That he was not ignorant of the extent to which oil painting had been practised before the time of the Van Eycks is certain; but as the *art* of painting in oil, properly so called, really began with them, he may be excused for omitting any notice of earlier and inferior attempts' (ibid. 264-5).

23. *A Critical Essay on Oil Painting, Proving that the Art of Painting in Oil was Known before the Pretended Discovery of John and Hubert Van Eyck; to which are Added, Theophilus de Arte Pingendi, Eraclius de Artibus Romanorum and a View of Farinator's Lumen Animæ*. It was published in May 1781. See DALRYMPLE 145 n. 23 and especially n. 26 and its references to HW's long-standing interest in the subject. See also *post* 4 Jan. and 25 April 1781. HW is favourably noticed throughout Raspe's *Essay*.

24. *Modern Anecdote of the Ancient*

Christmas box for *me*<sup>25</sup>—yes for *me*. It is a story that is no story, or scarce one; it is a sort of imitation of Voltaire, and yet perfectly original; there is nature, character, simplicity, and carelessness throughout, observation without pretensions, and I believe, a good deal of truth in some of the incidents, that I take to have happened. My vanity may have interested me too much, though I see it as a thing not likely to please; but if you read it *twice* which its brevity will easily allow, I think you will see real merit in it, especially when you know the author is young.<sup>26</sup>

### TO MASON, Saturday 22 January 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 66–7.

Jan. 22, 1780.

I LIKE much your essay on the celestinette,<sup>1</sup> which I have this minute received. Proceed, and say all that timid critics would be afraid to say. Show all the blunders and faults of the old masters, and prove that there can be no music, but by exploding prejudices, and by restoring ancient harmony.

I cannot write more now, for one of my fingers, which has long been a quarry of chalk-stones, and has been and is terribly inflamed with this last fit, has burst, and is so sore that I can scarce hold the pen. I muster all the resolution and spirits I can, but the latter often sink with the prospect I have before me of increasing pain and infirmity. To talk of prospect is seeming to reckon on old age as a permanency; but in the light I see it with its probable concomitants, be assured I do not brood with luxury over that chance!

Kirgate I cannot employ, for he is gone to Strawberry to print some verses of Mr Miller.<sup>2</sup> *Oui, véritablement*, of Mr Charles Miller, and

*Family of the Kinkvervankotsdarspraken-gotchdems: A Tale for Christmas*, 1779, by HW's friend, Lady Craven. No advertisement has been found, and it was not noticed in CM until Oct. 1780 (l. 475).

25. In her dedication to HW Lady Craven wrote: 'I shall be quite satisfied that you look upon this little book, as an acceptable Christmas-box, from one who esteems it a particular honour to be called your friend.'

26. Lady Craven was then twenty-nine.

1. Missing. Mason had written a ten-page description of it in 1761 (*ante* 18 Feb. 1775, n. 17).

2. '1780. At the end of January printed 150 copies of Mr Charles Miller's verses to Lady Horatia Waldegrave on the death of the Duke of Ancaster to whom she was to have been married' (*Journal of the Printing-Office* 19). See HW to Lady Ossory 29 Jan. 1780; Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 220. The author was probably Charles Miller (d. 1781), son of Sir John Miller,

very pretty they are. I shall send them to you, though not as an adequate recompense.

## TO MASON, Saturday 29 January 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 67–8.

Jan. 29, 1780.

HERE are Mr Miller's verses. His poetry, it seems, was no secret to you.<sup>1</sup> It is easy, and he has an ear.

Your tenant's late husband has resigned.<sup>2</sup> Have you much joy in such a convert?<sup>3</sup>

Hans Stanley has left various works:<sup>4</sup> one is a defence of our seizing the French ships previous to the last war.<sup>5</sup> It is a dialogue in imitation of Tully's philosophic works, and is written in *Latin* too. Do you wonder he cut his throat? I formerly was obliged to read a poem of his in three cantos at Lady Hervey's,<sup>6</sup> and what was fifty times worse, *before him*. It was the Ninth Statue from the *Arabian Nights*,<sup>7</sup> and in imitation of Dryden's fables. Whether good or bad you may imagine, I cannot tell,—I was to stop and admire, and very likely did—at the worst lines in it. Awkward he was, and brayed, but I never knew why he could not read his own work. He was now translating Pindar, and had fetched Dr Potter<sup>8</sup> to town to supervise it.

Lord George Gordon<sup>9</sup> has had an audience of the King, and read

4th Bt; equerry of the D. of Gloucester (GM 1781, li. 492).

1. This may point to a missing letter, or HW may have heard it from one of the Nuneham circle.

2. 'Yesterday [26 Jan. 1780] the Marquis of Carmarthen resigned his place as chamberlain to the Queen' (*London Chronicle* 27–9 Jan. 1780, xlvii. 97).

3. 'He had written to the committee at York that he approved of their meeting. He was a light, variable young man, of very moderate parts, and less principle' (*Last Journals* ii. 267).

4. Never published.

5. Probably the seizure of two French ships by Admiral Edward Boscawen on 10 June 1755, the action that precipitated war with France.

6. Mary Lepell (1700–68), m. (1720) Hon. John Hervey, Bn Hervey of Ickworth, 1733; HW's friend and correspondent. She had a high opinion of Stanley, describing him as 'a very ingenious, sensible, knowing, conversable, and, what is still better, a worthy, honest, valuable man' (*Letters of Mary Lepell, Lady Hervey*, ed. J. W. Croker, 1821, p. 204).

7. 'The Tale of Zayn Al-asnam' (*Supplemental Nights to the Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, trans. Richard F. Burton, 1887–8, iii. 3–38).

8. Robert Potter, the translator of *Æschylus* (ante 24 Jan. 1778).

9. Lord George Gordon (1751–93), who in June of this year instigated the No-Popery riots thereafter connected with his name. See *post* 4 and 9 June 1780.

an Irish pamphlet<sup>10</sup> to him for above an hour, till it was pitch dark, and then exacted a promise on honour that his Majesty would finish it; he did, and then went to skate. It is impossible to wind up a letter higher.

## TO MASON, Sunday 30 January 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 68–71.

Berkeley Square, St Charles's Day,<sup>1</sup> Jan. 1780.

**I** WROTE to you last night, and must write to you again, though I do not know whether you have leisure or inclination to attend to the idle occupations with which I am forced to amuse myself, as I seldom now stir out of my own house.

This morning, turning over the second volume of the new *Biographia*,<sup>2</sup> I found the following precious sentence in the last additional note to the life of Dr Bentley,<sup>3</sup> communicated by the ingenious Mr Cumberland, who giving an account too of his uncle Mr Bentley's<sup>4</sup> writings, *because* the latter has the honour of being related to *him*, says, speaking of *Philodamus*,<sup>5</sup> 'It was esteemed by the late eminent poet, Mr Gray, to be one of the most capital poems in the English language. *Accordingly*, Mr Gray wrote a laboured and elegant commentary upon it, which abounds with wit, and is one of his best productions.'<sup>6</sup>

10. Francis Dobbs, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Lord North on His Propositions in Favour of Ireland*, Dublin, 1780. On 24 Jan. 1780 Lord George had read this pamphlet to the House of Commons 'much to the dislike of the House, which, from near 200 members, soon thinned to less than 50' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xx. 1311). On the next day he tried again to read the pamphlet, but yielded to the protests of the members (*ibid.* xx. 1314). Lord George's motive was to demonstrate that the Irish were discontented with the concessions recently granted them. See *Last Journals* ii. 266.

1. The anniversary of the death of King Charles I, the 'royal martyr.'

2. The second edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, 5 vols (incomplete), ed. Andrew Kippis and others, 1778–93. The second

volume was published 18 Jan. 1780 (COLE ii. 186 n. 1).

3. Richard Bentley (1662–1742), D.D., the polemical Master of Trinity College, Cambridge.

4. Richard Bentley, HW's friend and correspondent, the son of the above. His sister, Joanna Bentley, married (1728) Denison Cumberland and was the mother of Richard Cumberland (G. F. Russell Barker and A. H. Stenning, *Record of Old Westminsters*, 1928, *sub* Denison Cumberland).

5. Richard Bentley's tragedy, published 1767; acted 14 Dec. 1782 at Covent Garden (Genest vi. 265–6), when a new edition was published. HW's copies of both editions are in the Harvard Library.

6. *Biographia Britannica*, 2d edn, ii. 247. 'Poet Gray wrote a long and elaborate critique upon this drama, which I saw,

I say nothing of the excellent application of the word *accordingly*, nor of the false English in the last *which*, which should refer to *it*, and not as he means it should, to *commentary*, nor to the pedantic and Bentleian epithets of *laboured and elegant*, terms far below anything of Gray's writing, and only worthy of prefaces written by witlings who are jealous of, and yet compliment, one another; but *laboured* I dare to swear it was not, and for the wit of it, though probably true, Cumberland of all men living, is the worst judge, who told me it was pity Gray's letters were printed, as they disgraced him.<sup>7</sup> I should be glad to see what this Jack-a-dandy calls a commentary, and which I suppose was a familiar letter,<sup>8</sup> and perhaps a short one, for Gray could express in ten lines, what the fry of scholiasts would make twenty times as long as the text.

Mr Cumberland, full as ingenuous as he is ingenious, has barely mentioned the edition of his grandfather's *Lucan*, which, with singular veracity, he says that he, Mr Cumberland, published.<sup>9</sup> The truth of which veracity is exactly this: the MS of the notes, I believe, was in Cumberland's possession, who gave it to his uncle for the latter's benefit,<sup>10</sup> and for that latter's benefit I printed it at Strawberry Hill,<sup>11</sup> entirely at my own expense, found the paper, and as it was at least a year printing, and I had but one printer<sup>12</sup> at a guinea a week, it cost

and though his flattery was outrageously pedantic, yet the incense of praise from author to author is always sweet, and perhaps not the less acceptable on account of its being so seldom offered up' (*Memoirs of Richard Cumberland*, 1806, p. 163).

7. HW reported this to Mason *ante* 27 Nov. 1775.

8. Gray's comments on *Philodamus* have not been found.

9. 'Other valuable remains of Dr Bentley are still in existence; some of which are in the hands of his executor, and some in those of Mr Cumberland. The latter gentleman is possessed of the Doctor's classic books, with his marginal notes. From these notes Mr Cumberland hath published an edition of *Lucan*, which, though not perfect throughout, is full and complete with regard to the four first books' (*Biographia Britannica*, 2d edn, ii. 244).

10. 'Doctor Richard Bentley [first cousin of the younger Richard] had the goodness to give me a valuable parcel of my grandfather's books and papers, containing . . .

a pretty large body of notes for an edition of *Lucan's Pharsalia*, which I gave to my uncle Bentley, and were published under his inspection by Dodsley at Mr Walpole's press' (*Memoirs of Richard Cumberland*, 1806, p. 71). In selling the published edition Dodsley acted merely as HW's agent (Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 48). 'On 1 January 1765 Bentley wrote a receipt (MS now at Harvard) to James Dodsley for £35, in full payment for 118 copies of *Lucan*. I assume that this payment represents the profit, since Alexander Chalmers in the *General Biographical Dictionary* (1812) says that Bentley received the profit from the sale of this edition, amounting to about £40' (*ibid.*).

11. '11 December 1758. Began to print *Lucan* in quarto with Dr Bentley's notes. . . . 8 January 1761. Published *Lucan*. 500 copies printed' (*Journal of the Printing-Office* 7-9).

12. The succession of HW's printers is given in *Journal of the Printing-Office*, *loc. cit.*

me above fifty guineas.<sup>13</sup> Mr Bentley alone selected and revised the notes, and he and I revised the proof-sheets; and as Mr Bentley did not choose, for reasons best known to himself or to his nephew, to appear the editor,<sup>14</sup> Cumberland's name was affixed to the dedication,<sup>15</sup> which, with the gift of the MS, entitled him I suppose to the right of calling it *his* publication,—an honour however which I shall not contest with him. I am no more jealous of such jackdaw's feathers, than I was flattered by them, when Bishop Pearce<sup>16</sup> complimented me on publishing *learned authors*,<sup>17</sup> for so he thought Lucan, because he wrote in what is foolishly called *one of the learned languages*: called so at first, no doubt, by one of those dunces who call themselves *learned men*. Did I ever tell you a ridiculous blunder that happened to our edition by Mr Bentley's and my carelessness? He had chosen for the motto a note out of the MS, in which were these words, *Multa sunt condonanda in opere postumo*;<sup>18</sup> so they stand in the title-page,<sup>19</sup> but alas! Mr Bentley had rejected the note, and thus the motto quotes a note not to be found in the edition. He did not recollect he had done so, and I never searched for the note till after the edition was published.

Well: I am but expunged out of the list of printers: you are to be dethroned as an author. Mr Cumberland has written a *laboured* and *elegant drama*, which by the title I concluded was to be very comical, and more likely to endanger the celebrity of Aristophanes, than of any living wight: it is called *The Widow of Delphi, or the Descent of the Deities*,<sup>20</sup> and I am told is to demolish the reputation of *Caractacus*. A *précis* of the subject was published two days ago<sup>21</sup> in the *Public Advertiser* for the benefit of the *illiterati*, who are

13. All of HW's printers except his fifth, William Pratt, who was paid half a guinea, were paid a guinea a week (*SH Accounts* 96).

14. Doubtless because of his creditors.

15. It was dedicated to Cumberland's patron, George Montagu (later Montagu-Dunk) (1716–71), 2d E. of Halifax, 1739.

16. Zachary Pearce (1690–1774), Bp of Bangor 1748–55, Rochester 1755–74; editor of Cicero's *De oratore* (1716) and *De officiis* (1745), and of Longinus (1724).

17. 'I cannot conclude this letter, without taking an opportunity of making my acknowledgments to you for the generous and disinterested share which you take at

Strawberry Hill in promoting learning, and giving to the world editions of learned works' (Pearce to HW 10 July 1761).

18. 'In a posthumous work many things are to be forgiven.'

19. There identified as from Book IV, note 641.

20. First acted at Covent Garden 1 Feb. 1780 (Genest vi. 146). Publication of *The Songs in the Widow of Delphi* was announced on the day of the first performance (*Public Advertiser* 1 Feb. 1780).

21. Only one day before the date of this letter. It appeared in the *Public Advertiser* 29 Jan. 1780.

informed that poor Shakespeare was mistaken in calling the spot of the scene *Delphos*, instead of *Delphi*.<sup>22</sup> I hope there will be a dance of Cyclopes (I don't know whether commentators will allow that termination) hammering, by the order of Venus, armour to keep the author invulnerable, who has hitherto been terribly bruised in all his combats with mortals.<sup>23</sup> He is as sore as a tetter, yet always blundering into new scrapes.

I have heard of something you received and suppressed,<sup>24</sup> and I adore your temper, prudence and virtue. For God's sake be always as firm; let us have nothing that squints that way. I doubt whether it ever ought to be the *ratio ultima* of any cause. I am sure it ought never to be the first *ratio* of the best cause; and it is certain that only the worst has generally been the better in the end for that *ultima ratio*. Adieu!

TO MASON, Wednesday 22 March 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 71-4.

Berkeley Square, March 22, 1780.

MONDAY, the day you left London,<sup>1</sup> exhibited a scene that has already produced martial consequences, or a second part to the history of Adam and Charles Fox.<sup>2</sup> I do not mean the ministerial

22. 'Shakespeare, in his *Winter's Tale*, coincides with the vulgar error, and calls it *Delphos*, and not *Delphi*' (ibid.).

23. The critics had been particularly severe on his *Battle of Hastings* (ante 24 Jan. and 4 Feb. 1778). It was generally believed that Cumberland was the model for Sheridan's caricature of the unappreciated author, Sir Fretful Plagiary, in *The Critic*. See Stanley T. Williams, *Richard Cumberland*, New Haven, 1917, pp. 144-50.

24. 'Sussex, Hertfordshire, Cheshire, Devonshire, and even Lord Sandwich's favoured Huntingdonshire, voted to hold meetings in the manner of Yorkshire. Devonshire even voted a fund for buying arms. General Hale in Yorkshire, wrote to Mr Mason, advising a like preparation of arms. Mason happened to be chairman that day, and wisely took on him to suppress the letter, and wrote to the General to remonstrate against such steps' (*Last*

*Journals* ii. 265). The author of the letter to Mason was John Hale (d. 1806), Lt-Gen., 1777, Gen., 1793, who played an active part in the Yorkshire meetings (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 50, 60; *Army List* for 1794, p. 2).

1. Mason had apparently come to London to help arrange and to attend the meeting of county deputies that is discussed by HW in this letter. Mason is not listed by Wyvill as one of the official deputies from Yorkshire, but his name is signed to a recommendation dated 28 Feb. 1780 from St Alban's Tavern, where the first session of the meeting was held 11 March, and the date of his departure from London, 20 March, was that of the final session (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 111-2, 116-26, 426).

2. See ante 29 Nov. 1779.



victory in defence of the Household:<sup>3</sup> no, I speak of a single combat. Mr Fullerton,<sup>4</sup> Lord Stormont's late secretary at Paris, broiling over the censure passed on him and his regiment in the House of Lords by the Duke of Richmond and Lord Shelburne,<sup>5</sup> particularly the latter, took advantage of the estimate of the army to launch out into a violent invective on the Earl, whom he named, but was stopped by Ch[arles] Fox and Barré.<sup>6</sup> Not content, nor waiting to see if Lord Sh. would resent, he sent the latter an account of what he not only had said but intended to have said, if not interrupted; the sum total of which was to have been that his Lordship's conduct had been a compound of insolence, cowardice and falsehood—

3. Burke's 'bill for the better regulation of his Majesty's civil establishments and of certain public offices; for the limitation of pensions, and the suppression of sundry useless, expensive, and inconvenient places; and for applying the moneys saved thereby to the public service' was debated 20 March 1780. The part of the bill which pertained to the royal household was rejected (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 111 and 296–309; *Last Journals* ii. 289–90). Later the entire bill was rejected, and Burke re-introduced it in the next Parliament. See *post* 19 Feb. 1781 and n. 7.

4. William Fullerton (1754–1808), army officer and politician; secretary to Lord Stormont's embassy at Paris, 1777–8; M. P. Plympton 1779–80, Haddington 1787–90, Horsham 1793–6, Ayrshire 1796–1803; first commissioner for the government of Trinidad, 1803–6. On 29 May 1780 he was gazetted lieutenant-colonel-commandant of the 98th regiment, which he had raised at his own expense (DNB; *Army List* for 1780, p. 175). The promotion was announced before 6 March; see next note.

5. Who spoke in the House of Lords 6 March 1780 against the practice of awarding 'occasional rank' in the army to untrained men. Fullerton was singled out for ridicule. Shelburne is reported to have said: 'This gentleman had never held any rank, or ever was in the army before; he had been clerk to the noble Lord (Stormont) when on his embassy to France, where perhaps he might have acquitted himself very well with his pen, but never was acquainted with the use of the sword; yet this clerk in office, this *commis*, contrary to all military establishments, con-

trary to all the spirit of the army, was now a lieutenant-colonel' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 218). Richmond 'desired any one lord to lay his hand on his heart, and fairly declare, whether he thought a man closeted in Paris, or thrust up behind a desk, could instantly, by intuition, step forward as a candidate for military command,' and proceeded to attack the 'mere exertion of power or ministerial caprice' which put 'a clerk to the embassy at Paris . . . over the heads of upwards of a thousand officers, many of them of long and tried service' (*ibid.* xxi. 222–3).

6. On 20 March 'Mr Jenkinson proposing to lay some army estimates before the House, Mr Fullerton . . . rose and broke out on what had been lately said . . . in the House of Lords by the Duke of Richmond and Lord Shelburne. . . . But he was much more warm and abusive on Lord Shelburne. . . . Fullerton added that the Earl must have known the falsehood of his accusations—the person he meant was the Earl of Shelburne. Here he was called to order by Charles Fox for *naming* persons and for referring to debates of another House. . . . Colonel Barré defended his friend Lord Shelburne, and hinted that Mr Fullerton had better seek satisfaction out of the House' (*Last Journals* ii. 288–9). See Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 293–6 and *Public Advertiser* 21 March 1780.

7. 'The following is said to be the literal billet that was sent by an insulted commoner to a noble peer, and which occasioned the personal contest that ensued: "My Lord, I have enclosed for your Lordship's perusal, not only what I advanced in yesterday's debate, but also what I fur-

very well, but to heap indiscretion on passion, he reproached Lord Shelburne with having as *he had heard abroad*, kept a correspondence with the enemies of his country.<sup>8</sup> My Lord replied, that the best answer he could give, was to desire Mr F. would meet him the next morning in Hyde Park at five o'clock. They met accordingly: Lord Frederick Cavendish<sup>9</sup> was the Earl's second: Lord Balcarras,<sup>10</sup> Fullerton's. Lord Shelburne received a ball in the groin, but the wound is slight<sup>11</sup> and he was so cool, that being asked how he did, he looked at the place, and said, 'Why I don't think Lady Shelburne will be the worse for it.' This second Scotch extravagance will serve to balance Sir Fletcher's and Temple Lutterell's late absurdities.<sup>12</sup> I wish I knew what would repair one that I have seen today, Mr Wyvil's manifesto.<sup>13</sup> You told me he was a sensible man; how could he set his name to such a performance, which I hear is drawn by a Mr Bromley?<sup>14</sup> I never saw such a composition of obscurity, bombast, and

ther intended to have urged . . . in reply to your Lordship's attack upon my character, which I deem *unprovoked, defamatory, and cowardly*"' (*Public Advertiser* 4 April 1780).

8. 'This [account] was couched in the grossest terms, and called Lord Shelburne's conduct insolence, cowardice, and falsehood, and, with as much indiscretion as brutality, he asked if such conduct became a leader of the Opposition, who, *as he had heard at Paris*, was in correspondence with the enemies of his country. This was supposed to mean Dr Franklyn, but was very imprudent on Lord Stormont's account, who, if informed of *treasonable correspondence* (which, however, with Franklyn was not so), ought to have accused Lord Shelburne' (*Last Journals* ii. 290-1). Shelburne had been acquainted with Franklin for many years, but no correspondence between them earlier than 1782 has been printed (*Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Albert H. Smyth, New York, 1905-7, viii. 461-2).

9. Lord Frederick Cavendish (1729-1803), army officer; M. P. Derbyshire 1751-4, Derby 1754-80.

10. Alexander Lindsay (1752-1825), 6th E. of Balcarres, 1768, *de jure* 23d E. of Crawford, 1808 (posthumously confirmed 11 Aug. 1848); army officer; lieutenant governor of Jamaica 1794-1801.

11. 'Mr Fullarton's second fire lodged a

ball, which passed through Lord Shelburne's waistcoat pocket, and being full of papers the force of it was impeded, and it only slightly wounded his Lordship in the upper part of the thigh' (*Public Advertiser* 23 March).

12. Violent charges of political jobbery were brought against Lord North by Sir Fletcher Norton on 13 March and by Temple Luttrell on 16 and 17 March. See *Last Journals* ii. 281-2; Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 271-3; *ante* 31 May 1778.

13. Rev. Christopher Wyvill (see *ante* 7 Dec. 1779, n. 1) was largely responsible for a memorial 'containing reasons for a plan of association, proposed by the deputies from the several counties, cities, and towns, who have petitioned Parliament for a redress of grievances,' printed in his *Political Papers* i. 427-36. The printing of 150 copies of the memorial had been voted by deputies from several local committees (*ibid.* i. 125).

14. Possibly Robert Anthony Bromley (ca 1736-1806), rector of St Mildred's in the Poultry 1775-1806, of St Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange, 1806; lecturer of St John's, Hackney. See GM 1806, lxxvi pt ii. 1078; Venn, *Alumni Cantab.* A Rev. Mr Bromley was deputy for Middlesex at the London meeting of the delegates of several local committees for Parliamentary reform, and received the thanks of the delegates 'for the

futility, nor a piece so liable to be turned into ridicule. The third paragraph, beginning *Let any man look back to the laws*,<sup>15</sup> I read two or three times before I could guess at the meaning. In the next appears this fustian sally, *the enormous, the compactly accumulated, the all-devouring influence of the Crown*.<sup>16</sup> Why your Yorkshire squires must think the Giant of Wantley is come again to swallow houses and churches like geese and turkeys!<sup>17</sup> The vague and indefinite manner of stating the resolutions at the end,<sup>18</sup> and which betrays a consciousness of their impropriety, destroys all the buckram that was crowded into the rest of the memorial; and the waiving annual Parliaments, till all is done that annual Parliaments are pretended to be wanted to do,<sup>19</sup> is such retrograde or topsyturvy logic as will give nobody a higher idea of the legislator.

In short, my dear friend, we shall lose all the benefit of the present spirit by the whimsies of men that have not the common sense, nor can express even what they mean. The candidates are to satisfy the electors 'by signing the association or *otherwise*,'<sup>20</sup>—a very definite sentence indeed in a decree of a tribunal that sets itself to change the constitution!<sup>21</sup> Mercy on us! were there not faults enough to amend,

memorial presented by him to this meeting' (Wyvill, *op. cit.* i. 125).

15. Actually the fourth paragraph. The opening sentence illustrates the obscurity of which HW complains: 'Let any man look back to the laws which have passed only in the ten last sessions of Parliament, forming, as it were step by step, a code of prerogative, which has already brought within its vortex the primary part of civil, religious, commercial, and military administration, within the kingdom or its dependencies, not excepting from its vast control all the branches of the royal family, and but too probably the succession of the Crown' (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 428).

16. *Ibid.* i. 429.

17. 'For houses and churches were to him geese and turkeys' (*The Dragon of Wantley*, l. 29; cf. Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, 1765, iii. 277–86).

18. See below n. 20.

19. From various circumstances, the deputies apprehend it may be found to be inexpedient in some counties to adopt a plan of association so extensive as that traced out by their resolutions. In that case, as it is the general and received opinion,

that shortening the duration of Parliament will be improper, till the economical reform, and a more equal representation of the people, have been obtained; the deputies conceive that the proposition for shortening the duration of Parliament, may be postponed with less inconvenience . . . than any other proposition recommended by this meeting' (Wyvill's covering letter, sent out with the memorial, in *Political Papers* i. 440).

20. 'Resolved . . . that it be most earnestly recommended to the freeholders of the different counties, and to the electors of the cities and boroughs, throughout the kingdom, to support, at the ensuing general election, such candidates to represent them in Parliament as shall previous to the election, by signing the association or otherwise, have satisfied them, that they will support the above important regulations in Parliament' (*ibid.* i. 437).

21. HW's objections to the resolutions adopted by the several local committees for Parliamentary reform are presented at length in *Last Journals* ii. 282–8 and *post* 13 and 17 April 1780. See HW to Mann 21 March 1780.

but we must leave them, ay let the people forget them, and turn their heads with points that will engender endless litigation and dispute!<sup>22</sup> Bring them back I beseech you if you can to some sobriety, or depend upon it, the cause will grow ridiculous. Such innovations dictated by deputies of thirteen counties<sup>23</sup> at a tavern in London<sup>24</sup> and announced in so wretched a manner and with so little argument can but be a joke. An arbitrary addition of an hundred members at once<sup>25</sup> without any deliberation or discussion, and including Scotland whether it will or not, and of which not a single county has petitioned, is surely very unwise, but I will say no more. I lament the misapplication of the nation's returning sense, we shall be lost in controversy on speculative points, and the Court will call itself defenders of the constitution by resisting such unprecedented methods of altering it.<sup>26</sup>

Dr Warton<sup>27</sup> was so kind as to call on me this morning and made me very happy, as I was glad to be acquainted with Gray's friend. He was three hours yesterday at Strawberry Hill with Mr Stonhewer. I did not intend to pursue you so soon, but I could not resist telling you of the duel. However, I will not continue to interrupt you but on good occasions, as I trust to your abilities for managing your wild associates.

22. Most notably, the resolutions calling for a more equal mode of representation in Parliament and for more frequent Parliaments, ultimately for annual Parliaments. For the resolutions see Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 437 and 440.

23. Buckinghamshire, Cheshire, Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Essex, Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Kent, Middlesex, Surrey, Sussex, and Yorkshire. There were also deputies from London, Westminster, Gloucester, Newcastle, and Nottingham (*ibid.* i. 426). HW later discovered that Cheshire failed to send its deputies (*Last Journals* ii. 292).

24. The deputies met on 11 March 1780 at St Alban's Tavern in St Alban's Street, Pall Mall, celebrated for political dinners

and meetings, but later meetings (14, 15, 17, 18, and 20 March) were at 'the Great Room in King Street, St James's,' presumably one of William Almack's assembly rooms. See Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 426.

25. This was one of the resolutions (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 437).

26. 'Whatever is obtained by menace or violence will not be permanent. The prerogative party are stunned, not converted, and every violence they complain of will preserve their friends, or reclaim those that have deserted' (*Last Journals* ii. 285).

27. Thomas Wharton (1717-94), M.D.; Gray's intimate friend; fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, 1739-47; fellow of the Royal College of Physicians 1754-94. See *Gray's Corr.* i. 142.

## TO MASON, Friday 7 April 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 74-7.

Berkeley Square, April 7, 1780.

I CONCLUDE you are now returned to your cure of souls,<sup>1</sup> and will be consequently at more leisure, and that one may hear from you. In the mean time you will be glad to hear of the Opposition's victory on the petitions<sup>2</sup> last night, when they had a majority of eighteen. The sixth of April ought for ever to be a red-lettered day, and at least as solemn a festival as the 29th of May,<sup>3</sup> for the question carried was, that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing,<sup>4</sup> and *ought to be diminished*.<sup>5</sup> I adopt the whole sentence into my revolution-creed, and would have added to Magna Charta, that whenever that influence has increased and is increasing, it ought to be diminished. In truth, after the five last years I did not imagine there was vigour enough left in *old* England to take such a jump backwards; but it confirms me more firmly in my opinion that the medium of wisdom consists in restoring the constitution and not in trying tricks upon it. Reinstate it in its rights, bind them tight with ribs of brass, consecrate with the most solemn religion the sacred-

1. Mason left London on Monday 20 March (*ante* 22 March 1780) and went to York for the meetings of the county committee for Parliamentary reform that were held 25-8 March (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 138, 141 and 165). He wrote to HW from Aston on 9 April.

2. 'The committee of the House of Commons [6 April 1780] thence commenced on the petitions, and near forty from counties and towns were piled on the table signed by thousands of names' (*Last Journals* ii. 294). The petitions, setting forth grievances and soliciting redress, were part of the general movement for Parliamentary reform. Dunning remarked that 'independent of the great objects which the petitions recommended to the care and attention of Parliament . . . there was one great fundamental point on which they hinged, that of setting limits or paring down the increased, dangerous, and alarming influence of the Crown, and an economical expenditure of the public money' (Cobbett, *Parl.*

*Hist.* xxi. 340-1). The most strongly worded petition was that agreed to at the Yorkshire meeting 30 Dec. 1779, presented to Parliament 8 Feb. 1780 by Sir George Savile (*Last Journals* ii. 270). The text is printed in Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 7-9.

3. The anniversary of the restoration of Charles II.

4. Mitford reads 'increased.'

5. Dunning moved two resolutions: (1) 'That it is the opinion of this committee, that it is necessary to declare, that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished,' and (2) 'that it is competent to this House, to examine into, and to correct, abuses in the expenditure of the civil list revenues, as well as in every other branch of the public revenue, whenever it shall appear expedient to the wisdom of this House so to do' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 347). The motion was carried by a vote of 233 to 215 (*ibid.* xxi. 367).

ness of juries, of the Habeas Corpus, and of the liberty of the press; but innovate not on the person of Parliaments—and for the swelling the number of representatives, I abominate the doctrine. I have an objection<sup>6</sup> of great weight with me, that I will not utter in a letter that may be opened. For written engagements<sup>7</sup> and annual Parliaments, I am clear that the first are often abused, and as likely to be turned against the authors, and for the second, they would soon annihilate the dignity of Parliament, or grow such a nuisance that very likely prerogative would be adopted as a counter-poison.

I shall die in these sentiments as corollaries to those in which I have lived, for I shall not see the event of my predictions. I have been very ill the beginning of this week, and felt as if I had something of an universal palsy, which I suppose was fancy, which I suppose was nervous, which I suppose was caused by the bitter east, but in short a very frail tenement is tumbling, and what signifies whether it is toppled down by wind getting in at the garret window, or by the crumbling of the foundations?

I have gotten three comfortably fat volumes in octavo of ancient French fabliaux,<sup>8</sup> but they look more good humoured from their corpulency than from intrinsic gaiety, as many plump men do. The fables are trite as that of patient Grisél; and the notes, which are the best part, as full of antique usages, are mortally heavy and devoid of taste; but I think you will like to see them, and will send them when I have gone through them, if you will point out a conveyance.<sup>9</sup> But I am diverted at present to a larger and stupendously magnificent work about nothing, only two uncommonly tall quartos containing the memoirs of that singular being Thomas Hollis;<sup>10</sup> a most excellent man, a most immaculate Whig, but as simple a poor soul as ever existed, except his editor,<sup>11</sup> who has given extracts from

6. This has not been ascertained.

7. Such as the associations proposed by the local committees for Parliamentary reform at their London meeting.

8. Pierre-Jean-Baptiste le Grand d'Aussy (1737–1800), *Fabliaux ou contes du douzième et du treizième siècle, traduits ou extraits d'après divers manuscrits du temps*, 1779, sent to HW by Mme du Deffand (DU DEFFAND v. 197–8).

9. Since they do not appear in the SH library records, HW doubtless did send them to Mason.

10. Thomas Hollis (1720–74), 'republican'; benefactor of Harvard; F.S.A. and F.R.S., 1757. HW's copy of the privately printed *Memoirs of Thomas Hollis*, 1780, 'elegantly bound in green morocco,' was sold London 1053 (removed from SH vii. 58). See COLE ii. 223 n. 9, and *post* 13 and 17 April 1780. Hollis edited Toland's *Life of Milton*, 1761, and nine other works, at least six of which (now in the Pierpont Morgan Library) he gave to HW.

11. Francis Blackburne (1705–87), latitudinarian divine; B.A., Cambridge, 1727;

the good creature's diary, that are very near as anile as Ashmole's.<sup>12</sup> There are thanks to God for reaching every birthday, prayers for continuance in virtue and nobleness of designs, and thanks to heaven for her Majesty's being delivered of a third or fourth prince, *and God send he may prove a good man*,<sup>13</sup> and continual apprehensions of designs of the Jesuits against him. Then there are faithful journals of the days on which he went to such a bookseller's, and bought such a set of books, which he gave to such a public library! This is all splendidly printed and decorated with cuts by Cipriani<sup>14</sup> and Bartolozzi,<sup>15</sup> and with fine prints of all our saints, Algernon Sydney, Milton, Locke, etc. In short imagine the history of an old woman that goes to a mercer's to buy a bombasine, with etchings of the deaths of Brutus and Cassius.

You will not soon, I doubt, see in print the tracts of Theophilus and Eraclius *De arte pingendi*.<sup>16</sup> I had begun to gather subscriptions,<sup>17</sup> but poor Raspe is arrested by his tailor. I have sent him a little money, and he hopes to recover his liberty, but I question whether he will be able to struggle on here.

### FROM MASON, Sunday 9 April 1780

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Mr Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WO<RKSOP> 11 AP.

Aston, April 9th, 1780.

rector of Richmond 1739-87, prebendary of Bilton 1750-87, archdeacon of Cleveland 1750-87.

12. Elias Ashmole (1617-92), antiquarian and astrologer. *The Memoirs of the Life of That Learned Antiquary Elias Ashmole, Esq., Drawn up by Himself by Way of Diary* was published in 1717. HW's two copies were sold SH i. 97 and iii. 21.

13. HW seems to be thinking of Hollis's remark on the birth of the Prince of Wales, 12 Aug. 1762: 'Pray God bless him, and endow him with all those noble qualities which are suitable to a chief ruler of a free

and magnanimous people' (*Memoirs*, i. 171).

14. Giovanni Battista Cipriani (1727-85), Italian historical painter and engraver who settled in England in 1755.

15. There are also several engravings by James Basire (1730-1802).

16. See *ante* 17 Jan. 1780. The book was not published until the following year.

17. The plan of printing by subscription was permanently laid aside. HW assumed the costs and saw Raspe's *Critical Essay on Oil Painting* through the press. See *post* 4 Jan. and 3 Feb. 1781.

Dear Sir,

THINGS went at York so differently from what I knew you would wish, that I could not prevail on myself to give you any account of them.<sup>1</sup> And though I think I could have defended the good opinion I entertain of Mr Wyville (who certainly cannot be called a fool because he assented to a majority who espoused a foolish memorial,<sup>2</sup> which that majority would have carried the publication of in spite of him) yet I thought it better to let you have the account of the whole proceeding from the papers,<sup>3</sup> and have only to add that you may depend upon it the general sense of the county is for supporting the measures they have adopted, and therefore certain of our friends<sup>4</sup> have lost much popularity by not concurring in those measures, whether rightly or wrongly time must show. For my part I only feel chagrin and disappointment. What can be said of men, who, after proving that there has been a waste of public money for the purposes of Parliamentary corruption to such enormous excess as would almost authorize a civil war, tell you very coolly that it is too rash a step to aim at a Parliamentary reform? But I know we shall not agree on this subject and therefore I drop it.<sup>5</sup>

All I have to add at present is that I beg you would direct your letters to me at Aston near Worsop,<sup>6</sup> because a new post from thence to Sheffield now passes my door three times a week. Thrice in this week has the snow covered my little copse and thrice melted, yet under an atmosphere as cold as Christmas. No grass and hardly any vegetation. Yet my guests<sup>7</sup> were flown, my house warm, and I feel at

1. At their meeting 25-9 March 1780 the York committee adopted the resolutions drawn up by the delegates of the several local committees for Parliamentary reform who met in London earlier in the month (*ante* 22 March 1780). At the same time the Yorkshire Association was formally constituted. See Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 138-67.

2. See *ante* 22 March 1780.

3. There are brief accounts of the York meeting in *London Chronicle* 1-4 April, xlvii. 328, and *Public Advertiser* 5 April 1780.

4. Notably Lord John Cavendish, who spoke against the resolutions (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 160), and the Rockingham faction as a whole (Mason to Harcourt 13 April 1780, *Harcourt Papers* vii. 67, and

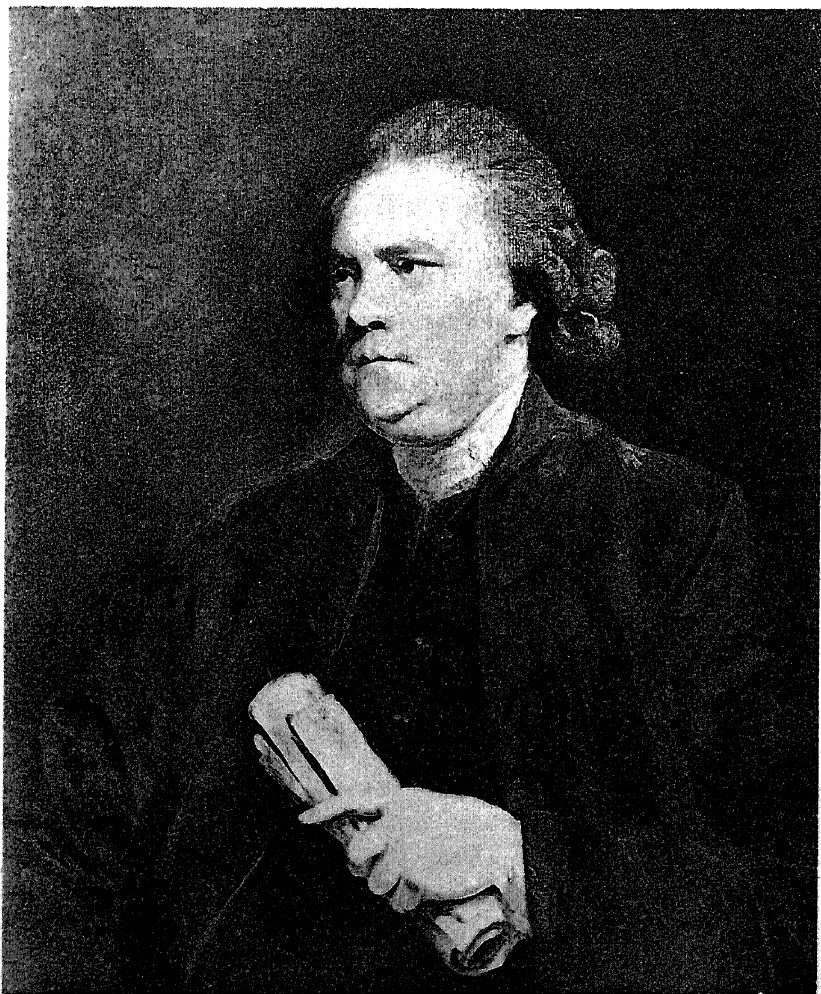
Lord Albemarle, *Memoirs of the Marquis of Rockingham and His Contemporaries*, 1852, ii. 395-400, 402-6). See *post* 13 April 1780 and HW to Mann 21 March 1780.

5. In his letter to Lord Harcourt 13 April 1780 Mason wrote: 'I have had a letter from him [HW's of 7 April] . . . reproaching . . . our Association measures. My idea of him is this, that he has no conception this country can be governed but by ministerial influence, and that he would not wish it to be governed better than his father governed it, and by the same means' (*Harcourt Papers*, loc. cit.).

6. Worsop, Notts, 18 miles SE. of Sheffield. Mason's spelling represents the local pronunciation. Aston is about half-way between Sheffield and Worsop.

7. The Byrons (*ante* 12 Nov. 1779).





WILLIAM MASON, BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, 1774



present in tolerable composure. A line from you at all times is one of my best treats.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Most truly yours,

W. MASON

### TO MASON, Thursday 13 April 1780

Printed from MS now wsl. MS apparently among those sold by the 5th D. of Grafton, grandson of James, 2d E. Waldegrave, to Richard Bentley the publisher; bought by wsl, 1937, from estate of Richard Bentley the younger.

*Headed by HW:* To Mr Mason, but not sent, as too strong.

April 13, 1780.

YOU have sent me a very temperate letter, I own it to your honour, and with great pleasure, as I interest myself in your dignity. I will observe your moderation for many reasons, and chiefly for that I do not pretend to match myself with you. Besides, I am heartily for union—so much, that it was a principal cause of my dislike of the introduction of new and speculative, that is, experimental, articles,<sup>1</sup> which could only introduce difference of opinion, and contradiction, and consequently would divide our party, and unite and strengthen the other. The constitution, as it was at the end of the last reign, made us the happiest (in which I include liberty as the first ingredient), richest, and most glorious nation in Europe.<sup>2</sup> Do allow me to think such a constitution perfect enough. I want to see that constitution restored—Amend it afterwards if you will or can.

What happened the other day<sup>3</sup> proves to my sense that there is still strength enough left in the constitution to work itself whole. When in less than five months the spirit of *part* of the people can force, or intimidate the most corrupt and most Tory Parliament that ever was, to add a codicil to Magna Charta, the House of Commons does not want an hundred members more. Few Houses of Commons ever did so much for liberty; nor would I for the universe touch a hair

1. See *ante* 22 March 1780 and nn. 20 and 22.

2. 'In fine, I am for restoring the constitution to what it was when it made us the happiest, richest, and most glorious

people that we ever were' (*Last Journals* ii. 286).

3. 'Vote of H. of Commons that influence of Crown ought to be diminished' (HW's note in MS). See *ante* 7 April 1780.

of a system that has conferred such a benefit. You yourself, as one of the first authors of that grace,<sup>4</sup> ought to be fond and tender of an engine by which you have wrought so much good—for should the vote be expunged from the journals tomorrow, it would remain a foundation of right, and a precedent to all posterity.

Will you allow me to use the freedom to differ with you on the consequence you draw from the question you ask? That is, whether the excess of money wasted in pensions does not call for a reform of Parliament—I am sorry you added, *almost for more!*<sup>5</sup> but on that head I should certainly not join you—*cuncta prius tentanda*.<sup>6</sup> In the first place, I do not think the alteration of the present modes, would at all prevent corruption. Take away the means of corruption, the effect would fall on course. But surely you do not think that the influence of the Crown on Parliament depends on the dry money<sup>7</sup> it has to give! So far from it, the want of money was a principal cause of the American war. Contracts, commissions, and ten thousand other sorts of bribes infinitely exceed all the votes that are purchased by what the Crown dispenses out of its own fob. Ask your dear Tory knights of shires whether all their prerogative principles, which never reconciled them to the house of Hanover in the late reign, have not been wonderfully cleared up by the operation of silent *douceurs* from the establishment of a militia.<sup>8</sup> Oh! my dear Sir, allow me, who have never budged from the scene of action, to know, at least to think I know, more of these practices, than you who have been warbling in immaculate groves.<sup>9</sup> In truth it is from indignation at much I know and see, that I can talk cordially but with very few.

4. I.e., Mason had been active in opposing the increase in the Crown's influence, both by his political satires and by his part in organizing the Yorkshire Association.

5. A rather cryptic paraphrase of Mason's 'as would almost authorize a civil war' (*ante* 9 April 1780).

6. 'All other means are first to be tried,' perhaps an echo of Ovid's 'cuncta prius tentata,' 'all other means had already been tried' (*Metamorphoses* I. 190).

7. Cash, actual coin (OED *sub* 'dry' a., 19).

8. HW was probably thinking of such sentiments as those expressed by Lord Shelburne in the House of Lords 6 March

1780. 'His Lordship adverted to the establishment and power of the militia, praised its original institution, and the constitutional effects such a body of freemen must, under proper regulations, yield to their country; but this great institution, ever since 1762, had been so broken in by acts of Parliament, as to throw its power and force into the hands of the Crown, that it was daily becoming one of the state engines of corruption' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 218).

9. It would seem likely that the passage from here to the end of the paragraph is the one that HW considered too 'strong' to send.

When our loudest reformers have started out of the mire, like St Paul, to turn apostles, I recoil, and cry, 'No, no, *non tali auxilio!*'<sup>10</sup>—but I will say no more. I do not erect my own judgment as a standard, but I must follow it. I am for adhering to fundamentals that I know—I cannot tell what the consequences of innovations would be. At least I must have a thorough experience of the abilities of those who give themselves for legislators of novelties; and who to me are but empirics till they have demonstrated their mission. I must own too that their memorial<sup>11</sup> gave me a woeful opinion of their capacity. I never knew but Oliver Cromwell who was so great [a] man that he could afford to talk gibberish.

The majority of the late minority<sup>12</sup> consisted on Monday in but two.<sup>13</sup> Do not you see that the Tories are afraid of their own success<sup>14</sup>—would you give them an hundred head more? Jove<sup>15</sup> would thank you for such a hecatomb—but I am to blame, and am ungrateful to dispute with you—excuse an old dying Whig!

Mr Hollis's *Memoirs* are not published but sent as presents to the elect.<sup>16</sup> They are certainly drawn up by some dissenter,<sup>17</sup> yet though often silly, often vulgar, ignorant and prejudiced, they contain some curious facts. They show how the Episcopalian spirit of that arch-hypocrite Secker<sup>18</sup> contributed to the American war<sup>19</sup>—and there

10. 'Not with such help' (*Æneid* ii. 521).

11. See *ante* 22 March 1780.

12. The Opposition, whose victory on 6 April (*ante* 7 April 1780) made it no longer a minority in fact.

13. Dunning's motion 'to exclude the Cofferer, Treasurers of Household and Chambers, and ten other officers from sitting in the House' (*Last Journals* ii. 298) in order to give Parliament greater independence of the Crown was carried by a vote of 215 to 213 (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 386).

14. In courting popularity by voting for a curtailment of the Crown's influence. 'The Tories certainly began to repent having gone so far with the Opposition, though only for fear of their elections' (*Last Journals* ii. 299).

15. 'The King' (HW's note).

16. The work was later published, on 23 May (*Public Advertiser*). See *ante* 7 April 1780 and n. 10.

17. Blackburne was sympathetic with dissenting sects, especially with the Unitarians, but remained nominally in the Church of England.

18. Thomas Secker (1693–1768), Bp of Bristol, 1734, of Oxford, 1737; Abp of Canterbury, 1758.

19. Secker was anxious to have bishoprics established in America (*Memoirs of Thomas Hollis*, 1780, i. 212), and on this Blackburne observed: 'They who without respect of persons or parties take a serious consideration of the present miserable embroilment of England with her colonists, will not scruple to acknowledge that the ecclesiastical policy of establishing prelacy in America was a considerable ingredient in the jealousy conceived by the colonists of the evil designs of the mother-country towards them' (*ibid.* i. 228).

is one remarkable anecdote breathing the full effluvia of the reign. Mr Hollis sent to the British Museum a satirical print against the Jesuits—the curators would not receive it.<sup>20</sup>

There is one paragraph in your letter that I forgot till reading it again, and to which I must speak, not to dispute, but to lament. You say our friends have lost much of their popularity by not concurring on the *new* articles, which the county<sup>21</sup> in general adopts. Does not this prove what I said, that these novel articles will disunite the party? You will see they have done so; and they who have lost ground in Yorkshire, will gain it in any other places—Look at the resolutions from Cambridge.<sup>22</sup> Lord Shelburne and Charles Fox were as much against the new articles as Lord J. Cavendish; but being more pliant politicians, gulped them—for a while.<sup>23</sup> Yet Lord Sh[elburne]'s own Wiltshire<sup>24</sup> has disclaimed the association,<sup>25</sup> which loses ground every day, since people have been told that they may have new articles tacked to their subscriptions at the fancy of any private leader of a shire. I, you well know, have not attachment to Lord Rockingham, nor have even once talked to the Cavendishes on

20. 'Mr Hollis presented to Christ's College in Cambridge a print *against* the Jesuits, which it seems was the representation of some emblematic figures, devised for the arms of that society, by some genius who was no friend to the order. One copy of the print was sent to the British Museum, as a present, but refused by the committee, and sent back' (*Memoirs of Thomas Hollis* i. 170).

21. Yorkshire.

22. Voted at the county meeting of 10 April 1780. It was resolved not to form an association on the Yorkshire model, for the Cambridge voters trusted 'that the House of Commons having made so noble a beginning, will be animated with a zeal to persevere, in deserving the highest confidence, and warmest thanks of their constituents and fellow subjects' (*London Courant* 13 April 1780).

23. 'The same right which the people had formerly, and through the blessing of God, exerted so happily for us their posterity, to have Parliaments *frequently holden* . . . now goes to have them *frequently and equally chosen*' (Shelburne to

John Audry 26 March 1780, in Wyvill, *Political Papers* iv. 134). On 6 April 1780, addressing the Westminster committee for reform, Fox declared himself for more frequent Parliaments and for the addition of 100 members. See *Last Journals* ii. 294. HW's suspicion of Shelburne's motives seems to have been without foundation. Fox, on the other hand, showed himself an 'uncertain friend' of reform (G. S. Veitch, *The Genesis of Parliamentary Reform*, 1913, pp. 35–6, 65, 95).

24. Bowood Park, near Calne, Wilts, was Shelburne's chief seat. 'Lord Shelburne purchased Calne from Duckett and Northey in 1763–65, and henceforth it was deemed his pocket borough' (L. B. Namier, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*, 1929, i. 167).

25. 'Lord Shelburne published a long letter to the Wiltshire committee [Shelburne to Audry 26 March 1780, cited in n. 23 preceding] with a list of the grievances and refusals of the winter; but it had so little effect that the committee broke up without adopting the association' (*Last Journals* ii. 293).

this chapter: yet I confess I am shocked and disgusted that men certainly honest and conscientious and lovers of their country, should become unpopular, because they will not swallow implicitly novel nostrums, neither discussed nor examined, very problematic, and imposed arbitrarily and inquisitorially as articles of faith or as conditions of election. This seems to me to flow from as despotic a spirit as any ordinance of a court, and to be as bad as exacting subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles.<sup>26</sup> For my part I should glory in such unpopularity—but, my dear friend, depend upon it, whoever dictates his own reveries, and insists on their being tests, will soon demolish all that *you* have done. A dictatorial ascendant must be the work of time. I told you early that demagogues of districts would split us into petty factions, and do the business of the Court. The wise, the great man, who is able to conduct the whole party, has not yet appeared. You, who have more sense than your whole county together, must steer and temper it, and not let your work be taken out of your hands and maimed by fantastic legislators, who are vain of their own ideas, and do not comprehend the conduct of a great machine. Every day produces some new project or new scent; and we shall be bewildered before anything is corrected; the consequence of engrafting new and heterogeneous propositions on a simple theme, disputable propositions, of which the expedience or inexpedience could not be known beforehand, and which were promulged before they had been weighed—no indication of modesty or discretion.—In one word, here are already articlists and non-articlists.<sup>27</sup> I have dwelt on this matter, to show the danger of precipitation or obstinacy—I can be of no use but to warn when I espy a rock—I foresaw the courtiers would clamour on innovations of the constitution, and already their papers<sup>28</sup> teem with those complaints. It can be nothing to me who shall never be in Parliament, how many are sent thither or for how long or for how little—but I tremble at touching fundamentals, and love no precedents that may cut two ways. There is another capital argument with me against disputable experiments and against losing time on them. Here has been an amazing change in opinions in a moment—The tide may turn as rapidly; and what-

26. HW is alluding to a tract by Wyvill on this subject. See next letter.

27. That is, those who were for and those

who were against the 'new and speculative' articles.

28. Such as Bate's *Morning Post*.

ever is gained extra-order<sup>29</sup> on such occasions, is the first thing subverted on a new revolution: whereas what is *restored* to the constitution, gains new strength, like a broken bone that is more firmly knit after a fracture.

I have done, and done with the subject—but it lay heavy on my mind. Use your discretion; you have more solidity as well as more parts than I. We may disagree in modes, but never shall in essentials, for we both mean the same thing—nor do I want to convert you to my opinions; but as you are an active man and I only a speculative one, there is no harm in my advertising you of whatever I think may prejudice the cause, and you will always judge for yourself whether I have reason or not. Adieu!

Yours most amicably,

H. W.

### TO MASON, Monday 17 April 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 79–81. This took the place of the unsent letter of 13 April, and repeats some of the material and phrasing of that letter.

Strawberry Hill, April 17, 1780.

YOU have sent me so temperate and obliging a letter, that I most certainly will not dispute with you, what I never wish to do. I will not say a word more on the novel articles. In fact they cease to alarm me, for they are generally distasted, and not likely to make their fortune. The counties of Northampton, Buckingham, Cambridge and Wiltshire have rejected them,<sup>1</sup> though Wilts is Lord Shelburne's province, but he I know and Charles Fox were utterly against them, and only complied for the moment. In short it was a disastrous project, has disgusted many of the Opposition and thence delighted the Court, who triumph on Mr Wyvil's attempt to remove subscription of the 39 Articles,<sup>2</sup> and who now would impose tests,

29. For 'extraordinary'; i.e., incidentally.

measures of shorter Parliaments and a larger number of representatives.

1. I.e., these counties had not put themselves on record as favouring the particular

2. In 1771 Wyvill had published *Thoughts on Our Articles of Religion*,



subscriptions and engagements to arbitrary and indigested plans of his own.

I am sorry for what you tell me of the new unpopularity of certain persons, not for their sakes, for can they regard it? Are honest conscientious men to lose credit with their countrymen for not swallowing implicitly any crude and disputable propositions that any man takes for an infallible nostrum? What measures of a court could be more despotic? And allow me to say that any man who would dictate to a whole party, ought to have given proofs of consummate abilities before he assumes so dictatorial a tone, and certainly before he will have his mission universally acknowledged.

In good faith, my dear Sir, it requires no great sagacity to foresee that such rashness and obstinacy will soon split the Opposition into an hundred petty factions. The Court is one compact body and uniform. The Opposition is a most heterogeneous assemblage; and as the great man who is to conduct them, has not yet appeared, I doubt that without much discretion and address, the present spirit will degenerate, and be lost in flippant projects that will clash with each other, and whose leaders will hate each other more than their common enemies. Your good sense must bridle those under your diocese, and even if you think my advice not sound, it may not be useless to have some too circumspect, as well as others too enterprising. The recovery of a majority of 26 last week by the administration<sup>3</sup> shows how little cordiality there was in the defection of the Tories. They are no doubt but temporizing with their constituents; perhaps have dispensations, and certainly would have them for taking engagements, which they would not observe when their elections were secured. Some Whigs deserted too, because their electors are officers of revenue. In short I have said enough to lead you to reflect what variety of interests ought to be weighed, before disputable ques-

*with Respect to Their Supposed Utility to the State*, against compulsory subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles. See also, for comments on Wyvill, the letters signed 'An Old Freeholder' in *London Chronicle* 25-8 March and 8-11 April 1780, xlvii. 300, 348. HW wrote that Wyvill 'had behaved infamously to Lord John Cavendish, having written to him and promised not to attempt those articles till real grievances [were] redressed; yet when Lord John went to York, Wyvill kept him and Sir George

Saville shut up in a room by themselves, while the articles were settled by the committee there. This pragmatic parson, who now wanted to impose subscriptions and engagements on candidates, had been the instigator of the attempt to take off subscription to the 'Thirty-nine Articles' (*Last Journals* ii. 299).

3. HW presumably alludes to the rejection 13 April 1780 of a bill for disqualifying certain officers, employed in the collection or management of the King's

tions are converted into articles of faith. It is good an army should be warm, but the generals ought to be very cool.

The House of Lords has rejected the contractors' bill,<sup>4</sup> a measure rash enough on their side, unless, as I suspect, they have received new assurances from the Tories. A strange event has suspended the consequences of that rejection, I mean the Speaker's retirement.<sup>5</sup> It is generally thought his successor will be your friend Frederic Montagu.<sup>6</sup>

Mr Hollis's *Memoirs* are not published but sent as presents to the elect. They are certainly drawn up by some dissenter, yet though often silly, vulgar, ignorant and prejudiced, they contain some curious facts. They show how the Episcopalian spirit of that arch-hypocrite Secker contributed to the American war, and there is one remarkable anecdote breathing the full effluvia of the reign: Mr Hollis sent to the British Museum a satirical print on the Jesuits. The trustees would not receive it.

revenues, from voting at elections. It was defeated by a vote of 224 to 195 (*Journals of the House of Commons* xxxvii. 788). In *Last Journals* ii. 299 HW recorded the vote as 226 to 195.

4. The Duke of Bolton's bill 'for restraining any person, being a member of the House of Commons, from being concerned himself, or any person in trust for him, in any contract made by the commissioners of his Majesty's treasury, the commissioners of the navy, the Board of Ordnance, or by any other person or persons for the public service, unless the said contract shall be made at a public bidding,' was defeated 14 April (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 414-57). 'The House of Lords threw out the contractors' bill, which had passed the Commons, by 57 to 41. This was a bold step of the Court, but was probably encouraged by the late majority in the Commons. Lord Hillsborough, as usual, was so indiscreet as to say the present spirit was *virtue run mad*' (*Last Journals* ii. 299).

5. 'The same day [14 April] Sir Fletcher Norton, Speaker of the Commons, was so ill that he declared from the chair he could not go on. Lord North pretended to be concerned, and pressed the House to give him time to recover; and he seemed to be a little softened, though his friends

said he had resolved never to come into the House more. However, the House immediately adjourned from that day, Friday, to the Monday sennight. It was suspected that there was some treachery in this. . . . The Court wanted time and delay, and the rejection of the contractors' bill would have raised an immediate flame, which ten days might at least abate' (*Last Journals* ii. 299-300). That the King, however, was annoyed rather than pleased by the delay, is shown by his letter to Lord North 14 April: 'I have not the smallest doubt that the Speaker has pleaded illness to enable the Opposition to pursue the amusement at Newmarket the next week; the adjourning for so long a time can alone be intended to delay the business; I hope it will not succeed' (*Corr. Geo. III* v. 43-4).

6. 'One of the reports at the West End of the town is, that a temporary Speaker will be fixed upon for the remainder of the present Parliament, that the choice of one, at the meeting of the next Parliament, is to lie between Mr Frederick Mountague and Mr Cornewall' (*Public Advertiser* 21 April 1780). Sir Fletcher Norton resumed the chair 24 April, but at the opening of the new Parliament, 31 Oct. 1780, Charles Wolfran Cornwall was chosen Speaker (*post* 1 Nov. 1780).

You have seen the Russian declaration,<sup>7</sup> I conclude. The European powers will probably oblige us to acknowledge the independence and free trade of America; it will be kinder than they intend it to us and will give repose to those poor sufferers, whom our country gentlemen devoted to destruction, and do not seem even in their hour of resipiscence to recollect.

I am glad you have recovered your Lares and Penates, but don't you find them a little more wanton than you left them?<sup>8</sup> I hope before you commence your fourth book, that you will not be forced to purify your walks from the deity of gardens.<sup>9</sup>

My last was sent by Rotherham, not having received your new route. Adieu.

## TO MASON, Tuesday 25 April 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 82-4.

Berkeley Square, April 25, 1780.

**I**T is not to boast of sagacity that I tell you that I have guessed rightly. The Tories have returned to the Court, and gave it yesterday a great majority on Dunning's motion for an address against proroguing or dissolving the Parliament till grievances<sup>1</sup> were redressed. The motion was rejected by 254 to 203.<sup>2</sup> Sir Roger Newdigate,<sup>3</sup> who has affected to have opened his prerogative eyes, though

7. On 26 Feb. 1780 the Empress of Russia sent to the belligerent courts of London, Versailles, and Madrid a declaration of Russia's intention of maintaining, by force, if necessary, all of the trading rights to which as a neutral she felt herself entitled. Communicated to other neutral powers, it became the basis of the policy of 'armed neutrality.' The text of the declaration was printed in the newspapers, e.g., *London Chronicle* 8-11 April, xlvii. 351, and *Public Advertiser* 12 April 1780.

8. Because of the recent occupancy of Mason's house by Captain Byron and his

wife, Lady Conyers. See *ante* 12 Nov. 1779.  
9. Priapus.

1. The grievances mentioned in the several petitions sent to Parliament. See *ante* 7 April 1780.

2. Confirmed by Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 522.

3. Sir Roger Newdigate (1719-1806), 5th Bt, 1734; M. P. Middlesex 1741-7, Oxford University 1750-80; antiquary and benefactor of Oxford; founder of the poetry prize that bears his name.

he owned he detested those to whom he had gone over,<sup>4</sup> voted with many other true-blue<sup>5</sup> friends in the majority. The Tories of Cheshire have played as signal a trick.<sup>6</sup> I knew, when they were set down as subscribers to the association that they had sent no deputation thither, and if anybody presented himself there as deputed, that it was without authority and only from zeal. This is not to dispute, but to justify myself to you for having been less sanguine than you. I remember a notorious instance of Tory treachery to Lord Holland in the late reign, the particulars of which are too long for a letter.<sup>7</sup> I have not so much spirit as you, and experience and age have made me still more diffident, but they do not shake my principles. They are even more firm on finding we are thus beaten; deceived I have not been, for I expected no better from an alliance with Tory country gentlemen, who hallooed the Crown to ravage America, and then attacked it because they had been such gulls. However I rejoice that they have shown themselves, the Crown must dote on them as much as I do.

I was going to send you Fitzpatrick's excellent parody of George Selwyn's advertisement to his electors at Gloucester,<sup>8</sup> but I find it is in today's *Courant* and will certainly get into the other papers. In its room I will transcribe a riddle, not with all its mysteries, for then it would be inexplicable. The ghosts of Odin and Gray must pardon my speaking so irreverently of what they alone could expound. This fragment I believe genuine, for the editor has not made it dance to Macpherson's hornpipe, nor pretends that there are clergymen living in the Highlands who have been able to say it by heart for these thousand years. This is an Icelandic stanza, the English of which, says Dr Uno von Troil,<sup>9</sup> is 'I hang the round beaten gaping snake

4. 'Sir Roger Newdigate . . . had owned he hated the Opposition, but preferred knaves to fools' (*Last Journals* ii. 300). Elsewhere HW described Newdigate as a 'half-converted Jacobite' (*Mem. Geo. III* ii. 293).

5. 'True blue was the colour affected by the Jacobites of the late reign, now the staunchest courtiers of the present' (HW's note on Mason's *Epistle to Dr Shebbeare*, l. 147, Mason's *Satirical Poems* 120).

6. 'The gentlemen of the county of Chester have . . . dissolved their committee of correspondence [on the plan of as-

sociation for Parliamentary reform]' (*Public Advertiser* 20 April 1780).

7. HW is probably referring to the St Michael's election of March 1755, in which Fox's candidate was defeated by Newcastle's through the defection of the Tories. See *Mem. Geo. II* ii. 10-14 and HW to Bentley 27 March 1755.

8. See Appendix 6.

9. Uno von Troil (1746-1803), Swedish scholar and divine; Bp of Linköping, 1784; president of the consistory of Stockholm, 1787; Abp of Upsala, 1787. In 1772 he was

on the end of the bridge of the mountain bird at the gallows of Odin's shield.'<sup>10</sup>

The sense of this nonsense is, a Mr Ihre<sup>11</sup> affirms, 'I put a ring on my finger.' I do not lessen the enigma by giving you the solution,<sup>12</sup> for now you are to make out *how* that can be. If you can, you deserve to be poet laureate of Hecla,<sup>13</sup> for Dr Von Troil says, there were poets laureate in Iceland,<sup>14</sup> though they have no laurel, nor anything else but volcanoes and boiling fountains, some of scarlet, and some as white as milk.<sup>15</sup> As you know I love poetry with images entirely new, you would oblige me with a pastoral in which should be a description of this landscape, and which Mrs Cornelys<sup>16</sup> if still living, shall convert into a ridotto.<sup>17</sup>

I am but just come to town and know nothing else; you can have nothing of a cat but her politics and her studies. Adieu.

a member of Joseph Banks's scientific excursion to Iceland (Halldór Hermannsson, *Sir Joseph Banks and Iceland*, Ithaca, New York, 1928, p. 4; *Islandica*, vol. xviii). His *Letters on Iceland* was originally written in Swedish and published at Upsala in 1777. The book was later translated into German by J. G. P. Möller and thence into English by Susanna Dorothy Forster, and published 6 April 1780 (*London Courant* 6 April; Hermannsson, op. cit. 8). HW's copy of the English translation, with a MS note, was sold SH v. 126.

10. *Letters on Iceland*, 2d edn, 1780, p. 201.

11. Johan Ihre (1707-80), Swedish philologist.

12. To find the sense of these words, Mr Ihre observes, that by the gallows of Odin's shield is meant the arm, on which it is usual to wear the shield. By the word *ripa* is understood a falcon, for a skald has the permission of putting one genus for another. The bridge of the falcon is the

hand, on which the falconer places him, and its end . . . is the finger. The gaping round beaten snake means a ring; and consequently this long story means no more than, I put a ring on my finger' (*Letters on Iceland*, pp. 201-2).

13. A volcano in Iceland, described by Von Troil, *ibid.* 239-44.

14. 'Poetry formerly flourished very much in Iceland' (*ibid.* 158).

15. 'In the smaller springs . . . the water was tainted; in some it was as muddy as that of a clay-pit, in others as white as milk; and yet there are a few springs where the water forces itself through a fire underneath as red as blood' (*ibid.* 264-5).

16. Theresa Cornelys (1723-97), Italian-born singer and manager of entertainments, sometime mistress of Casanova. Her assembly-rooms in Carlisle House, Soho Square, were famous in the 1760's. At this time she was living in retirement.

17. 'An entertainment or social assembly consisting of music and dancing' (OED).

## TO MASON, Friday 19 May 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 84-9. Dated by the postscript. The body of the letter was written 'many days' before, although apparently not earlier than 12 May; see n. 40 below.

THE newspapers have told you all that I could have said, and that nothing has happened worth repeating or detailing. The spirit you *raised* is evaporated or split into a thousand branches by mismanagement. The Opposition is as much divided amongst themselves, as they and the ministers; and those squabbles more than any other cause have re-established the predominance of the Court. The Bishop of St Asaph<sup>1</sup> showed me a sensible letter from his son, the Dean,<sup>2</sup> who says, it was with much difficulty that he prevailed to have the committee of their county<sup>3</sup> adjourned, and that it would have been infallibly dissolved if he had pressed the association. In short, I can only lament that the sole chance we have had in so many years of recovering the vigour of this country has been thrown away. The ministers, though detesting each other more than the factions in the Opposition, have had the sense not to quarrel, and they reap the benefit of *unanimity*, which we<sup>4</sup> professed and could not observe for a moment.

Did you see *Royal Reflections*?<sup>5</sup> they are excellent, and I am persuaded were written by Fitzpatrick.<sup>6</sup> The courtiers are restringing their lyres too. There is *An Ode*,<sup>7</sup> said to be written by Soame Jenyns,<sup>8</sup> and I believe so from one or two strokes of humour, though in general a paltry performance. The preface is an attack on Gray

1. Jonathan Shipley (1714-88), D.D.; B.A., Oxford, 1735; Dean of Winchester, 1760; Bp of Llandaff, 1769, of St Asaph, 1769; friend of Benjamin Franklin and advocate of the American cause.

2. William Davies Shipley (1745-1826), divine; B.A., Oxford, 1769; Dean of St Asaph 1774-1826.

3. HW means Cheshire (see preceding letter) even though St Asaph is actually in Flintshire. Flintshire associated itself with Cheshire in any large political effort. See H. C. Maxwell Lyte, 'The Palatinate of Chester and Flint,' *Flintshire Historical Society Publications*, 1922, ix. 31.

4. The Opposition in general.

5. Verses signed 'X.Y.Z.', published in the *Public Advertiser* 2 May 1780, lampooning the King's 'passion for absolute rule.'

6. Corroboration of HW's guess has not been found.

7. So titled. Publication was announced in the *Public Advertiser* 9 May 1780. HW's copy is now in the Harvard Library.

8. It is included in his *Works*, ed. Charles Nelson Cole, Dublin, 1790, i. 174-83.

and you, who I am sure are our only Pindars.<sup>9</sup> The conclusion ironically implores liberty:

To shield us safe, beneath her guardian wings,  
From law, religion, ministers and kings.

Soame Jenyns does think, I do not doubt, that ministers ought to be our law, and kings our religion. When you are in your own-*issime* vein, I trust you will remember him.

You know, I suppose, that the Royal Academy at Somerset House is opened.<sup>10</sup> It is quite a Roman palace, and finished in perfect taste as well as boundless expense. It would have been a glorious apparition at the conclusion of the great war; now it is an insult on our poverty and degradation. There is a sign-post by West<sup>11</sup> of his Majesty holding the memorial of his late campaign, lest we should forget that he was at Coxheath when the French fleet was in Plymouth Sound.<sup>12</sup> By what lethargy of loyalty it happened I do not know, but *there* is also a picture of Mrs Wright<sup>13</sup> modelling the head of Charles I, and their Majesties contemplating it.<sup>14</sup> Gainsborough has five landscapes

9. Modern composers of odes are ridiculed in the preface, but no names are mentioned.

10. 'Yesterday at twelve o'clock, was opened the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy, at their *new exhibition room*' (*Public Advertiser* 2 May 1780). When the King made a gift of the old Somerset House to the nation so that a new building for government offices might be erected on its site in the Strand, he reserved the right to bestow apartments in the new building on the Royal Academy. For a description of the new rooms see GM 1780, I. 220; William Sandby, *The History of the Royal Academy of Arts*, 1862, I. 154-8. New Somerset House was built between 1776 and 1786 under the direction of Sir William Chambers. See Joseph Baretti, *Guide through the Royal Academy*, [1781]; J. E. Hodgson and F. A. Eaton, *The Royal Academy and Its Members 1768-1830*, 1905, p. 48.

11. Benjamin West (1738-1820), American-born painter who settled in England in 1763; one of the planners of the Royal Academy; P.R.A. 1792-1804, 1805-20. The comparison of West's pictures to tavern

signs was made by others besides HW. See W. T. Whitley, *Gilbert Stuart*, Cambridge, Mass., 1932, p. 42.

12. The picture shows George III in military dress at Coxheath Camp, attended by two equerries, identified as Lord Amherst and Lord Lothian. He is holding a scroll, and in the background is the English fleet. The painting is now at Buckingham Palace. A reproduction of it has been used as the frontispiece of Lewis Einstein's *Divided Loyalties* (1933).

13. Patience Lovell (1725-86), American-born modeller in wax; m. (1748) Joseph Wright; in London after 1772. Her exhibitions, 'long popular in London, were akin to those held in more recent times by Madame Tussaud. Mrs Wright was an eccentric but able woman whose house was a meeting-place not only for her fellow-countrymen but for eminent men of all nationalities, and particularly for artists' (W. T. Whitley, *Artists and Their Friends in England 1700-1799*, 1928, II. 55; cf. Einstein, *op. cit.* 390-5).

14. Joseph Wright (1756-93) 'exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1780 a portrait of his mother, *Mrs Wright modelling a*

there,<sup>15</sup> of which one especially is worthy of any collection, and of any painter that ever existed.

There is come out a life of Garrick, in two volumes, by Davies the bookseller, formerly a player.<sup>16</sup> It is written naturally, simply, without pretensions, nay and without partiality (though under the auspices of Dr Johnson<sup>17</sup>) unless, as it seems, the prompter reserved all the flattery to himself, and according to an epigram on the late Queen and the Hermitage:<sup>18</sup>

—whispered let the incense all be mine.

In consequence the author calls the pedant the greatest man of the age,<sup>19</sup> and compares his trumpery tragedy of *Irene* to *Cato*.<sup>20</sup> However the work is entertaining and deserves immortality for preserving that *sublime* saying of Quin (which, by the way, he profanes by calling it a *bon mot*) who disputing on the execution of Charles I, and being asked by his antagonist by what law he was put to death, replied, *by all the laws he had left them*.<sup>22</sup> I wish you would

*head in wax* . . . , the singularity of which attracted the attention of the public. The head that Mrs Wright was modelling was that of Charles I and the accessories shown in the picture include representations of wax heads of George III and Queen Charlotte. The combination was unusual and . . . there were people who suspected that a hidden meaning was attached to Joseph Wright's work' (Whitley, op. cit. ii. 55). See Einstein, op. cit. 391. Since both Wrights were supporters of the American cause, the suspicion seems well grounded.

15. Gainsborough had six landscapes and ten portraits in the exhibition of 1780. See W. T. Whitley, *Thomas Gainsborough*, 1915, p. 167, and Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts*, 1905-6, iii. 192. All the portraits have been identified, but not the landscapes (Whitley, op. cit. 167 and 170).

16. Thomas Davies (ca 1712-85), actor, bookseller, and author, who introduced Boswell to Johnson. Publication of the *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick* was announced in *Public Advertiser* 6 May 1780.

17. If this little book should by good chance afford an hour's amusement to the candid reader, he will owe that pleasure to Dr Samuel Johnson, who has long

honoured me with his friendship and patronage. He prompted and encouraged me, justly diffident as I was of my abilities, to write the life of David Garrick' ('Advertisement,' *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick*, 1780). Johnson furnished information and wrote at least the introductory paragraph.

18. A small building erected for Queen Caroline in Richmond Gardens in 1732, adorned with busts of Newton, Locke, Wollaston, Clarke, and Boyle. The *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1733 (iii. 208) offered a prize for the best poem on it, and in 1732-3 both the *GM* and *London Magazine* printed many such poems, some of them satirical. See note in GRAY ii. 39. The epigram HW quotes has not been found.

19. Davies described Johnson as 'now the first name in the literary world' (op. cit. i. 5).

20. Addison's *Cato*. 'Since the days of *Cato*, no tragedy had been acted, which was so justly admired for beauty of diction, energy of sentiment, harmony of versification, and purity of moral, as *Irene*' (ibid. i. 120).

22. Ibid. ii. 112-3. HW had told this anecdote to Montagu in 1765 (MONTAGU ii. 150).



translate it into Greek, and write it in your Longinus; it has ten times more grandeur, force and meaning than anything he cites.

Apropos to the theatre, I have *read* the *School for Scandal*:<sup>24</sup> it is rapid and lively, but is far from containing the wit I expected from seeing it acted.<sup>25</sup>

May I leap from the stage to the bench? Sir Thomas Rumbold,<sup>26</sup> one of our Indian mushrooms, asked his father-in-law, the Bishop of Carlisle,<sup>27</sup> to answer for a child that he had left in a parsley-bed of diamonds at Bengal. The good man consented; a man-child was born. The other godfather was the Nabob of Arcot,<sup>28</sup>—and the new Christian's name is—Mahomet!<sup>29</sup> What pity that Dr Law was the godfather<sup>30</sup> and not [the] Bishop of Hagedorn<sup>31</sup> or your metropolitan!<sup>32</sup>

Mr Jones,<sup>33</sup> the orientalist, is candidate for Oxford.<sup>34</sup> On Tuesday

24. HW must have read the play either in MS or in an unauthorized Dublin edition of 1780.

25. See *ante* 16 May 1777.

26. Sir Thomas Rumbold (1736–91), Indian administrator; cr. (1779) Bt; governor of Madras 1777–80. Rumbold amassed an immense fortune that was looked upon with suspicion by his contemporaries. In 1782–3 his conduct in India was the subject of a Parliamentary inquiry. See James M. Holzman, *The Nabobs in England*, New York, 1926, pp. 159–60 and *passim*; *Memoirs of William Hickey*, ed. Alfred Spencer, 1913–25, ii. 194–6; Sir Nathaniel W. Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs of His Own Time*, 1836, iii. 193–4; *Bengal Past and Present*, 1922, xxiv. 189–92.

27. Edmund Law (1703–87), D.D.; Bp of Carlisle 1768–87. Rumbold married, as his second wife, in 1772, Joanna Law (d. 1823), the Bishop's ninth child.

28. Muhammad Ali Khan Walajah (1717–95), Nawab of the Carnatic after Clive took Arcot on his behalf in 1751, and puppet of the British government at Madras. See C. E. Buckland, *Dictionary of Indian Biography*, 1906, p. 74; Holzman, *op. cit.* 55.

29. HW's anecdote is unsubstantiated; the son born to the Rumbolds at Madras in 1778 was christened Anwer (or Anwaer) Henry, a name apparently derived from the Arabic word Anwār ('lights'), sometimes used as an honorific (Burke, *Peerage*, 1928; *Vict. Co. Hist. Herts* iii. 164; informa-

tion kindly supplied by Mr Leon Nemoy).

30. HW approved of Law's opposition to the Thirty-nine Articles and to the policies of the administration. See *Last Journals* i. 283 and 534–5.

31. 'Apparently Richard Hurd, at this time Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. He was a Court favourite, and was probably called by Walpole "Bishop of Hagedorn" in contemptuous allusion to the Queen's German Bedchamber Woman of that name' (Mrs Toynbee's note, xi. 170). Fanny Burney relates of Hurd that he always dined with Mrs Schwellenberg and Mrs Hagerdorn on his annual Christmas visits to the Court (*Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay*, ed. Charlotte Barrett and Austin Dobson, 1905, iii. 134). Both of these attendants had accompanied the Queen when she came to England from Mecklenburg-Strelitz. In 1786 Mrs Hagerdorn resigned her post and returned to her native land. See *Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay*, *passim*, and *Court and Private Life in the Time of Queen Charlotte: Being the Journals of Mrs Papendiek*, ed. Mrs V. D. Broughton, 1887, i. 6 and 13.

32. William Markham, Abp of York.

33. William (later Sir William) Jones (1746–94), 'Persian Jones'; oriental scholar and jurist; Kt, 1783; B.A., Oxford, 1768; fellow, University College, Oxford, 1766; F.R.S., 1772; called to bar at Middle Temple, 1774; judge of the high court of Calcutta 1783–94; pioneer of Sanskrit studies.

34. 'Sir Roger Newdigate has signified

was sennight Mrs Vesey<sup>35</sup> presented him to me. The next day he sent me an absurd and pedantic letter,<sup>36</sup> desiring I would make interest for him. I answered it directly, and told him I had no more connection with Oxford than with the antipodes, nor desired to have. I doubt I went a little farther, and laughed at Dr Blackstone,<sup>37</sup> whom he quoted as an advocate for the rights of learning, and at some other passages in his letter. However, before I sent it, I inquired a little more about Mr Jones, and on finding it was a circular letter sent to several, I did not think it necessary to answer it at all; and now I am glad I did not, for the man it seems is a staunch Whig, but very wrong-headed. He was tutor to Lord Althorpe,<sup>38</sup> and quarrelled with Lord Spencer,<sup>39</sup> who he insisted should not interfere at all in the education of his own son.

There are just appeared three new *Epistles on History*, addressed to Mr Gibbon by Mr Hayley.<sup>40</sup> They are good poems, I believe, weight and measure, but except some handsome new similes, have little poetry and less spirit. In short, they are written by Judgment, who has set up for herself, forgetting that her business is to correct verses, and not to write them. Mr Gibbon I doubt will not be quite pleased, for as the *Epistles* have certainly cost the author some pains, they were

his intention of resigning his seat for the University of Oxford . . . in consequence of which three candidates have begun to canvas for the vacancy, viz. Professor [William] Scott, and Mr Jones, both of University College, and Sir William Dolben' (*London Courant* 3 May 1780). Jones's candidacy is discussed in his letters printed in John Shore, Baron Teignmouth's *Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Correspondence of Sir William Jones*, 1805, pp. 177-86 (Philadelphia edn). In September, realizing that he could not win, Jones withdrew from the contest (*ibid.* 186-9). Dolben was returned.

35. Elizabeth Vesey (ca 1715-91), m. (1) William Handcock of Willsbrook, co. Westmeath, and (2) (before 1746) Agmondesham Vesey of Lucan, co. Dublin; blue-stocking 'who collects all the graduates and candidates for fame, where they vie with one another, till they are as unintelligible as the good folks at Babel' (HW to Lady Ossory 14 Jan. 1781).

36. Missing.

37. Sir William Blackstone (1723-80), legal writer and judge; Kt, 1770; B.C.L., Oxford, 1745, and D.C.L., 1750; professor of English law at Oxford 1758-62; author of the *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. Blackstone had Tory sympathies. See *Mem. Geo. III* ii. 198 and iii. 215 and 241.

38. George John Spencer (1758-1834), styled Vct Althorpe 1765-83; 2d E. Spencer, 1783; politician and patron of learning, and one of the greatest of English book-collectors. Jones was Lord Althorpe's tutor 1765-70.

39. John Spencer (1734-83), cr. (1761) Vct Spencer of Althorpe, and (1765) E. Spencer.

40. William Hayley (1745-1820), poet and biographer. Publication of *An Essay on History, in Three Epistles to Edward Gibbon, Esq.*, was announced 12 May 1780 (*Public Advertiser*). It is a poetical survey of the writing of history from ancient days to the present, embellished with notes. HW's annotated copy is at Harvard.

probably commenced before the historian's conversion to the Court,<sup>41</sup> and are a little too fond of liberty to charm the ear of a convert, which too the author wants to make him in another sense,<sup>42</sup> and that will not please, unless he has swallowed his Majesty's professions as well as his pay.

In another new publication, called *Antiquities and Scenery in the North of Scotland*,<sup>43</sup> I have found two remarkable passages, which intimate doubts of the antiquity of Ossian, though the author is a minister in Bamff. The first, in p. 77, says, 'If only like a morning dream the visions of Ossian came in later days.' The other humbly begs to know, p. 81, how Fingal became possessed of burnished armour, when the times knew not the use of steel and iron.<sup>44</sup>

My quondam friend, George Montagu, has left your friend Frederic five hundred pounds a year.<sup>45</sup> I am very glad of it.

I have heard what I should not repeat, as I do not know that it is true, but today I see it in the papers. In short they say that the unfortunate Knight of the Polar Star<sup>46</sup> has disappeared.<sup>47</sup> The reason given is that a demand of £300,000 more for finishing the sumptuous edifice where Somerset House stood, having been made to the House of Commons, Mr Brett,<sup>48</sup> a member, begged to see an account of

41. In July 1779 Gibbon was appointed to a seat on the Board of Trade, with a salary of £750, through his friend Wedderburn, the attorney-general. The Opposition was not slow to charge that Gibbon had been bought by the Court party. See D. M. Low, *Edward Gibbon 1737-1794*, 1937, pp. 278-84.

42. In a religious sense. Hayley remonstrates with Gibbon's freethinking tendencies:

'Think not my verse means blindly to engage

In rash defence of thy profaner page!' etc. (iii. 371-2).

43. *Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland*, in a Series of Letters to Thomas Pennant, 1780. The author was Charles Cordiner (ca 1746-94), minister of St Andrew's Chapel, Banff. The book was noticed in *Critical Review* June 1780, xlix. 437-42. HW's copy was sold with Pennant's *Works* SH iv. 6, as appears from Payne and Foss's catalogue, 1845, lot 703.

44. 'But how shall we reconcile opposing

testimonies? the heroes appear in burnished armour, and "steel mingles with steel," at a time when a hammer was not lifted, nor a trowel used in the palaces of their princes' (*Antiquities and Scenery*, pp. 81-2).

45. George Montagu, with whom HW had not corresponded since 1770, died 9 May 1780. His will left Lord North and his family a reversion of £600 a year (not £500) after the death of Frederick Montagu. See COLE ii. 211 n. 3.

46. Sir William Chambers.

47. 'A subaltern in the royal works, who a few years ago was the hero of a celebrated *Heroic Epistle*, is reported to have disappeared, with a considerable sum of money in his pocket' (*London Courant* 18 May 1780). See *post* 24 and 28 May 1780.

48. Charles Brett (d. 1799), M. P. Lostwithiel 1768-76, Sandwich 1776-80 and 1784-90, Dartmouth 1782-4; a lord of the Admiralty 1782-8 (N&Q 1862, 3d ser., ii. 63; Robert Beatson, *Political Index*, 1806, i. 392-3; CM 1799, lxix pt i. 173, 250;

what had been already expended,<sup>49</sup> and the next day all the telescopes in town could not descry the Swedish planet. I am sorry, considering that the constellation of the Adelphi was not *rayée* from the celestial globe after their bubble lottery.<sup>50</sup> I suppose Ossian will keep his ground, and would, if Macpherson should please to maintain that he lived before Tubal.<sup>51</sup>

Berkeley Square, May 19, 1780.

Most part of this letter has been written many days, I waited for a proper conveyance. Now it comes to you in what Wedgwood<sup>52</sup> calls a *Druid's mug*:<sup>53</sup> you must drink out of it *Ruin seize thee ruthless King*.<sup>54</sup> Mr Stonhewer gave me the direction but I find it will not set out before Tuesday; however, I shall not be able to add to this volume, as I go to Strawberry tomorrow and must leave it for the wagon. Sir Charles Hardy is dead suddenly.<sup>55</sup> Lord Bathurst I suppose, will have the command of the fleet, as the senior *old woman on the staff*.<sup>56</sup>

I shall settle at Strawberry on Tuesday sevensnight, so if you have a mind to hear from me you must write, for I shall know no more there than you in Yorkshire, and I cannot talk if nobody answers me; somebody knocks, which is a very good conclusion when one has no more to say, oh it is Mr Palgrave: well he tells me that Sir William

information kindly supplied by Dr Gerrit P. Judd).

49. On 10 May Brett stated that 'the completion of the new buildings [Somerset House] will amount to £300,000, and he wished to know whether the supplies . . . ought to be subject to the discretionary power of the Treasury, to take from them [public funds] by their warrant such sums as have been already taken for these buildings, for it does not appear how they have been expended' (*Public Advertiser* 11 May 1780).

50. See *ante* 17 Sept. 1773 and nn. 6 and 8.

51. The son of Japheth (Genesis 10. 2).

52. Josiah Wedgwood (1730–95), modeller and potter; F.R.S., 1783; F.S.A., 1786.

53. 'These drinking-cups were exact copies from the antique. . . . They were made as early as 1774, chiefly in basaltes, the rims being usually edged with silver. . . . In Christie's sale catalogue [1781]

. . . appear . . . "Druidical Mugs" and "Sportsmen's Drinking Cups" (Eliza Meteyard, *The Wedgwood Handbook*, 1875, pp. 310–11; information kindly supplied by Mrs Robert D. Chellis).

54. The opening line of Gray's *The Bard*.

55. 'On Tuesday last [16 May] Sir Charles Hardy arrived at Portsmouth from London, to take upon him the command of the Channel fleet, *when it shall be ready*; but in the evening he was seized with a severe fit of the gout, which, on Wednesday, getting into his stomach, he died there in the evening of the same day' (*London Courant* 19 May 1780).

56. Bathurst was lord president of the Council from 24 Nov. 1779 to 27 March 1782 (Beatson, *op. cit.* i. 351). The point of HW's remark appears *ante* 9 Aug. 1779: 'Two dotards are at the head of the only fleet and only army that are to decide our fate.'

Chambers is not gone away, so I retract all, but that the Adams ought to be gone. Adieu.

From MASON, Saturday 20 May 1780

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WORKSOP 23 MA.

Aston near Worsop, May 20th, 1780.

WERE I to apologize for my long silence<sup>1</sup> by saying that I waited till I could congratulate you on the going out of that ministry which you said could not possibly hold its ground after its very first defeat and *twitted* me not a little because I held the matter *possible*,<sup>2</sup> I should think I made a justifiable excuse. Yet as you say you have not been deceived by the return of the Tories to their vomit ('tis a Scripture phrase)<sup>3</sup> I fear you would not admit such apology. Take then the true one. I am sick of writing about politics. The Whigs love wallowing in their mire ('tis another Scripture phrase) full as well as the Tories. There then I leave them, and sit myself down in patient expectation of the millennium of despotism. For nothing now can save us but what the people will never have the spirit to resolve upon. I don't mean a civil war, but a civil and pacific resolution not to pay any taxes. For instance, an exciseman comes to demand my post-chaise tax.<sup>4</sup> I suffer him to bear home on his shoulders my pianoforte and so on, preserving all the while a Quaker-like non-chalance. How do you like my system? I know you dislike it, because you would sooner be taxed ten shillings in the pound than part with Cardinal Wolsey's hat<sup>5</sup> or Harry the 8th's clock weight,<sup>6</sup> but I, God be thanked, have no such valuable personalities.

1. On 1 June 1780 Mason wrote of HW to Lord Harcourt: 'I have had two or three very long political and literary letters from a certain friend of ours who is at times so spitfire and at times so frightened, so strenuous for pulling down ministers and so careless of saving the nation, so zealous for the constitution and trembling at every step that is meant to support it, that it makes a sad mic mash of his epistolary writings, in which every other paragraph confutes its next neighbour. But he is only like the rest of his own school, who I think have

fairly done their own business by not supporting ours, and they begin to feel it . . . ' (MS in possession of Viscount Harcourt).

2. Mason seems to be recalling a conversation with HW.

3. This and the phrase quoted two lines below are in 2 Peter 2.22. The Tories' 'return to the Court' is reported *ante* 25 April 1780.

4. See *ante* 21 Aug. 1779, n. 4.

5. See *ante* 10 June 1777, n. 2.

6. 'A clock of silver gilt, richly chased,

There is a woman who has addressed a sort of Whiggish ode to my Reverence<sup>7</sup> and has applauded me for having praised Lord John Cavendish<sup>8</sup> just at the moment when I had settled it in my own mind that the said Lord had not one particle of true Whiggism in his composition. Has she not timed matters well? Yet provided she is found to be poor I have employed a lady to give her five guineas. If I am not a good Whig I hope you will allow that I am a good Christian.

I have seen Mr Hollis's *Memoirs*. They have done me some good and have made me relish my old Mother Church better than I have done of some time. I remember some years ago Dr Kaye<sup>9</sup> preached a sermon in York Minster in which he praised the excellency of our ecclesiastical constitution, its purity, simplicity, etc., so highly, that I whispered the residentiary that sat next me, 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Presbyterian!' These *Memoirs* have brought me back again to almost my pristine orthodoxy. I cannot, however, read our prayer about America<sup>10</sup> with due unction.

I suppose you have heard that Mr Tyson is dead,<sup>11</sup> just after he was settled in a good living near London. I fear he expended so much

engraved, and ornamented with fleurs de lys, little heads, etc., on the top sits a lion holding the arms of England, which are also on the sides. This was a present from Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn; and since, from Lady Elizabeth Germaine to Mr Walpole. On the weights are the initial letters of Henry and Anne within true lover's knots; at top, *Dieu et mon droit*; at bottom, *The most happy*.—One of the weights, agreeably to the indelicacy of that monarch's gallantry, is in a shape very conformable to the last motto. The pedestal is adorned with small heads of bronze gilt of the age of Henry VIII, but which did not belong to the clock' (*Des of SH* 1784, p. 35). In *Works* ii. 445 the description ends with *mon droit*.

7. *Ode to the Rev. Mr Mason*, by Eliza Ryves. Publication was announced in the *Public Advertiser* 4 May 1780. Elizabeth Ryves (1750–97), having been cheated of property in Ireland, settled in London and there made a precarious living by her pen. HW's copy of the *Ode* is now in the Harvard Library.

8. 'Yet while by Falsehood's impious choir

Debased, the blushing Muse complains,

On Mason's truth-directed lyre

She breathes her purest, chastest strains;

Round Darcy's bower the palm she rears,

For Ca'ndish civic wreaths prepares' (*Ode to . . . Mason*, stanza xviii).

9. Sir Richard Kaye (1736–1809), 6th Bt, 1789; D.C.L., Oxford, 1770; chaplain to the King, 1766–84; sub-almoner to the King, 1768–84; prebendary of York 1768–83, of Southwell 1774–80 and 1783–1809, of Durham 1777–84; archdeacon of Notts 1780–1809; prebendary and Dean of Lincoln 1783–1809; rector of Marylebone 1788–1809; F.R.S. and F.S.A. See CEC, *Complete Baronetage* ii. 157–8; Nichols, *Lit. Anec.* ix. 804; Foster, *Alumni Oxon.*

10. Quoted in part *ante* 12 Nov. 1779, n. 12.

11. Michael Tyson (1740–80), antiquary and artist; fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 1767–80; rector of Lambourne

in making his parsonage comfortable (for I saw it last summer and it was very much so) that he has died very poor. I am told his books etc. are to be sold soon<sup>12</sup> for the benefit of his widow<sup>13</sup> and child.<sup>14</sup> I fancy he has left some antiquarian drawings etc. that might be worth your purchasing. The name of his living was Lamburne, I think on the edge of Epping Forest.<sup>15</sup>

I hope (little as I deserve it) to hear from you very soon. Believe me.

Yours very sincerely,

W. MASON

TO MASON, Wednesday 24 May 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 92-3.

May 24, 1780.

YOU will have found that I did not wait for your replying, for though I wish to hear from you much oftener than I do, yet I am neither punctilious nor insist on your writing so frequently as I, who am near the seat of news, though it is sure that I should be pleased with whatever you would send me, and should delight in your conversation on any subjects. Well! I say you have found—have not you? I sent you a present by the wagon, and a long letter, so this will be very short, for I exhausted myself.

If I was positive, and have been mistaken, I am most ready to acknowledge it. It would ill become me to be obstinate, when I blame others for being too positive. I think I could show what occasioned my being disappointed, but that would look too like not giving up my bad judgment when I pretend to give it up, and I had much rather abandon my own mistakes, than not accede to your

1778-80; friend of Mason and Gray, and HW's occasional correspondent. He died 4 May 1780.

12. Tyson's library was sold by Leigh and Sotheby, Feb. 1781 (*List of Catalogues of English Book Sales 1676-1900 Now in the British Museum*, 1915, p. 83).

13. Margaret Wale (fl. 1760-85), dau. of

Hitch Wale of Shelford; m. (1) (1778) Michael Tyson; m. (2) (1784) Isaac Crouch (COLE ii. 97 n. 3; *Royal Kalendar* 1794, p. 184; 1795, p. 184).

14. Michael Curtis Tyson (1779-94).

15. Lambourne, Essex, is 4 miles SE. of Epping.

opinion whenever I can. In one point I assuredly cannot conform, I mean to your wish that the people would refuse to pay taxes. Alas! what would be the consequence? Some would be committed to prison: the witless mob would break open the prisons, and some of them would be shot, and some of them, for their incendiary leaders would desert them, would be hanged. Oh! my dear Sir, I can never approve of scenes so likely to produce such consequences! I am not so convinced of the infallibility of my principles, of any modes of religion or government as to risk the blood of a single being. Could I establish my system whatever it were, should I be able to restore the lives lost in the pursuit of my doctrines?

Has heaven authorized me to make this man happy at the expense of another man's life? No, no, nor will I ever let you who are all virtue and humanity, be less tender than I am, who am not a quarter so good.

As to this country, it is sunk perhaps never to rise again; but that is a theme would carry me into a volume. All may be reduced to two heads; the nation is *insensible*, and though we have parts we have no wisdom. Orators we have I believe superior to the most boasted of antiquity, but we have no politicians. Can either the Court or the Opposition boast of a single man who is fit to govern a whole country, much less to restore one! the nation itself is of my opinion: to whom does it look, up or down? From that essential defect everything the ministers attempt, miscarries; and the Opposition is split into little factions. It is my opinion that Europe itself is worn out. Has one great general or admiral risen out of this extensive war?

The story of Sir W. Chambers is odd; he is certainly in Flanders, but there is no embezzlement;<sup>1</sup> he has money in his bankers' hands, writes to his family, and sends orders to his workmen at Somerset House. In short it is a mystery, which time, which establishes truth, but much oftener falsehood, must settle. Adieu.

1. 'Upon a late inspection into the accounts of Sir William Chambers, it does not appear that there is the least room for many of the late reports concerning that

gentleman. It is true that he is not in town' (*London Courant* 23 May 1780). See *ante* 19 May 1780.



## TO MASON, Sunday 28 May 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 94-8.

Strawberry Hill, May 28, 1780.

THERE has been such an uncommon event that I must give you an account of it, as it relates to the republic of poetry, of which you are president, and to the aristocracy of noble authors, to whom I am gentleman-usher. Lady Craven's comedy called *The Miniature Picture*, which she acted herself with a genteel set at her own house in the country,<sup>1</sup> has been played at Drury Lane.<sup>2</sup> The chief singularity was that she went to it herself the second night, in form; sat in the middle of the front row of the stage-box, much dressed, with a profusion of white bugles and plumes, to receive the public homage due to her sex and loveliness. The Duchess of Richmond, Lady Harcourt, Lady Edgcumbe,<sup>3</sup> Lady Ailesbury, Mrs Damer,<sup>4</sup> Lord Craven,<sup>5</sup> General Conway, Colonel O'Hara,<sup>6</sup> Mr Lenox<sup>7</sup> and I were with her. It was amazing to see so young a woman entirely possess herself—but there is such an integrity and frankness in her consciousness of her own beauty and talents, that she speaks of them with a *naïveté* as if she had no property in them, but only wore them as gifts of the gods. Lord Craven on the contrary was quite agitated by his fondness for her

1. Benham Place, Berks, near Newbury. 'The new comedy, ascribed to Lady Craven . . . was acted at Newbury on the 8th of last month by her Ladyship and a few of her London friends' (*London Chronicle* 18-20 May 1780, xlvii. 487). It was 'first performed at the town hall at Newbury for the benefit of the poor' (Lady Craven's memoirs in *The Beautiful Lady Craven*, ed. A. M. Broadley and Lewis Melville, 1914, ii. 146).

2. *The Miniature Picture* was first acted at Drury Lane 24 May 1780; it was played 31 May for the fourth and last time (Genest vi. 133-5). 'Under pretence of writing an Epilogue for my play . . . [Sheridan] borrowed it of me, and brought it out against my will at Drury Lane, where it was acted for three nights: yet, enraged as I was, by the persuasion of Lord Orford and the Duchess of Devonshire, and Lady Aylesbury, in whose box I sat, I went to its last representation' (Broadley and Melville, loc. cit.). A printed copy of the play was

licensed 22 May 1780, but the earliest published edition seems to be of 1781; HW's copy is now at Harvard. See *The Plays and Poems of Richard Brinsley Sheridan*, ed. R. Crompton Rhodes, 1928, iii. 290.

3. Emma Gilbert (1729-1807), m. (1761) George Edgcombe, Bn Edgcombe of Mount Edgcombe, cr. (1781) Vct Mount Edgcombe, and (1789) E. of Mount Edgcombe.

4. Anne Seymour Conway (1748-1828), only child of HW's cousin, Hon. Henry Seymour Conway, by Lady Ailesbury; m. (1767) Hon. John Damer, eldest son of Bn Milton (later E. of Dorchester); sculptress; HW's executrix and residuary legatee.

5. William Craven (1738-91), 6th Bn Craven of Hampsted Marshall.

6. Charles O'Hara (ca 1740-1802), natural son of James O'Hara, 2d Bn Tyrrawley; Col., 1777, Maj.-Gen., 1781, Lt.-Gen., 1793, Gen., 1798; Mary Berry's fiancé. See BERRY i. 119 n. 10.

7. Possibly Charles Lennox (1764-1819), 4th D. of Richmond, 1806.

and with impatience at the bad performance of the actors, which was wretched indeed,<sup>8</sup> yet the address of the plot, which is the chief merit of the piece, and some lively pencilling carried it off very well, though Parsons murdered the Scotch lord,<sup>9</sup> and Mrs Robinson<sup>10</sup> (who is supposed to be the favourite of the Prince of Wales) thought on nothing but her own charms, or him.<sup>11</sup> There is a very good though endless prologue written by Sheridan<sup>12</sup> and spoken in perfection by King,<sup>13</sup> which was encored (an entire novelty) the first night:<sup>14</sup> and an epilogue that I liked still better and which was full as well delivered by Mrs Abington,<sup>15</sup> written by Mr Jekyl.<sup>16</sup> The audience, though very civil, missed a fair opportunity of being gallant, for in one of those —logues, I forget which, the noble authoress was mentioned,<sup>17</sup> and they

8. In the 'Advertisement' to the printed version of the play *Lady Craven* wrote: 'The author . . . publishes it at the request of several of her friends, who saw it mis-represented on the stage at Drury Lane.' For a contemporary critical account of the Drury Lane presentation see the *London Chronicle* 23–5 May 1780, xlvii. 503. A list of the actors is given in Genest vi. 134.

9. William Parsons (1736–95), actor and painter; the 'comic Roscius.' 'Mr Parsons' Lord McGrinnon was the worst Caledonian dialect that ever was delivered on a stage' (*London Chronicle* 23–5 May 1780, xlvii. 503).

10. Mary Darby (1758–1800), 'Perdita,' m. (1774) Thomas Robinson; actress, chiefly remembered as the first mistress of the Prince of Wales (later George IV), who, after seeing her as Perdita in *The Winter's Tale* on 3 Dec. 1779, paid court to her as 'Florizel.' After the final performance of *The Miniature Picture* 31 May 1780 Mrs. Robinson quit the stage (Genest vi. 137). George III paid her £5000 in 1781 for the Prince's letters to her (*Corr. Geo. III v.* 269–70).

11. A much more favourable account of Mrs Robinson's performances was printed in the *London Courant* 29 May 1780.

12. 'The Prologue, written by R. B. Sheridan, Esq., and spoken by King, is replete with wit, full of ridicule on the follies of the times, and is at least equal, if not superior, to any ever delivered to

an audience' (*London Courant* 25 May 1780). The first thirty of its eighty lines, with an added couplet, were later used by Sheridan as the Prologue to his *Pizarro* (1799). See *The Plays and Poems of Richard Brinsley Sheridan*, ed. R. C. Rhodes, 1928, iii. 280; Genest vi. 135–6.

13. Thomas King (1730–1805), actor, playwright, and manager of King Street Theatre 1770–1, of Sadler's Wells 1771–8, of Drury Lane 1782–3, 1785–8.

14. 'It was encored, at the termination of the play, with a unanimity and vociferation never remembered' (*London Courant* 26 May 1780). 'Sheridan's prologue is said to have been so approved of, that the audience called for it again at the end of the play, and waited till King, who was gone home, could return to speak it' (Genest vi. 134–5).

15. Frances Barton (1737–1815), actress; m. (ca 1759) James Abington, one of the royal trumpeters; 'the most admired representative of the grand coquettes and queens of comedy' (DNB; C. B. Hogan, *Eighteenth-Century Actors in the DNB: Additions and Corrections* [reprinted from *Theatre Notebook*, 1952], p. 4).

16. Joseph Jekyll (ca 1753–1837), wit and politician; B.A., Christ Church, Oxford, 1774; called to bar, Lincoln's Inn, 1778; Benchers, Inner Temple, 1795; M. P. Calne 1787–1816; F.R.S. and F.S.A., 1790; K.C., 1805.

17. 'It is a lady writes—and hark—a noble Muse' (Prologue, l. 33).

did not applaud as they ought to have done, especially<sup>18</sup> when she condescended to avow her pretty child and was there looking so very pretty. I could not help thinking to myself how many deaths Lady Harcourt would have suffered rather than encounter such an exhibition:—Yet Lady Craven's tranquillity had nothing displeasing, it was only the ease that conscious pre-eminence bestows on sovereigns whether their empire consists in power or beauty. It was the ascendant of Millamant and Lady Betty Modish and Indamora;<sup>19</sup> and it was tempered by her infinite good nature, which made her make excuses for the actors instead of being provoked at them. I have brought hither her portrait<sup>20</sup> and placed it in the favourite blue room, and so I have the delightful picture of Charles II and Rose his gardener,<sup>21</sup> but have been forced to remove two others less in my graces, for I have not an inch of room now unoccupied. Sir Joshua has begun a charming picture of my three fair nieces, the Waldegraves,<sup>22</sup> and very

18. Printed 'exceedingly' by Mitford, but corrected by him in the margin of his copy.

19. Characters in, respectively, Congreve's *Way of the World*, Cibber's *Careless Husband*, and Dryden's *Aureng-Zebe*. (Mitford reads 'Millamont . . . Indamore'.)

20. Painted by Romney in 1778. HW wrote on the back of it in 1779 his verses beginning:

'Full many an artist has on canvas fixed  
All charms that Nature's pencil ever  
mixed—'

(SH sale catalogue xi. 19). For a description and history of the portrait see Humphry Ward and William Roberts, *Romney: A Biographical and Critical Essay with a Catalogue Raisonné of His Works*, 1904, ii. 35. It was presented to the National Gallery in 1898 by Lt-Gen. the Hon. F. W. Stopford, and transferred to the Tate in 1919 (Mary Chamot, *The Tate Gallery, British School, a Concise Catalogue*, 1953, p. 192). Although it is today one of Romney's most familiar portraits it does not seem to have been reproduced earlier than 1857, when it was engraved by William Greatbach for Cunningham's edition of HW's letters.

21. John Rose (ca 1619–77), gardener to the Duchess of Somerset, afterwards to the Duchess of Cleveland and Charles II (Sir

William Musgrave, *Obituary Prior to 1800*, 1899–1901, v. 173). 'A most curious picture of Rose the royal gardener, presenting the first pineapple raised in England to Charles II, who is standing in a garden: the house seems to be Dawny Court near Windsor, the villa of the Duchess of Cleveland. The whole piece is well painted, probably by Danckers [Henry Danckerts (ca 1630–ca 1680)]. It was a present to Mr W. from the Rev. Mr Pennicott of Ditton, to whom it was bequeathed by Mr London, grandson of him who was partner with Wise' ('Des. of SH,' *Works* ii. 423). It was sold SH xi. 20 to J. M. Smith for £22 1s.; in 1858 it belonged to Henry Labouchère; sold Sotheby's 15 July 1920 (Taunton heirlooms sale), lot 133, to Agnew for £620; it then passed to Sir Philip Sassoon and from him (1948) to the Marchioness of Cholmondeley. It is now (1954) at Houghton. See also HW to Cole 6 March 1780 (COLE ii. 200).

22. The painting was finished in the following year and shown at the Royal Academy exhibition. HW in his note on the catalogue of that exhibition remarks: 'A most beautiful composition, the pictures very like, and the attitudes natural and easy' (Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts*, 1905–6, vi. 274). See *post* 6 May 1781. HW later found fault with the details of the painting (*post* 10 Feb. 1783).

like. They are embroidering and winding silk.<sup>23</sup> I rather wished to have them drawn like the Graces adorning a bust of the Duchess as the Magna Mater—but my ideas are not adopted; however I still intend to have the Duchess and her two other children as Latona, for myself.<sup>24</sup>

There has been a bloody scramble in the West Indies,<sup>25</sup> which the extraordinary *Gazette* has created a victory.<sup>26</sup> Some of Rodney's<sup>27</sup> captains have behaved ill;<sup>28</sup> it is lucky that when our officers do not choose to fight, the French should choose to run away.<sup>29</sup> Admiral

Pinkerton reports HW as having said: 'Sir Joshua Reynolds gets avaricious in his old age. My picture of the young ladies Waldegrave is doubtless very fine and graceful; but it cost me 800 guineas' (*Walpoliana* ii. 157). But Reynolds's receipt (now WSL) reads: 'Received June 7th 1782 from the Honble Horace Walpole the sum of three hundred guineas for the Lady Waldegraves' pictures. J. Reynolds.' The picture was hung opposite the chimney in the Refectory ('Des. of SH,' *Works* ii. 403). See Algernon Graves and W. V. Cronin, *A History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1899–1901, iii. 1017–8 and iv. 1430. It is now in the National Gallery of Scotland.

23. 'Laura sits in the middle, winding a skein which Maria on her right is holding. Horatia, on Laura's left, is bending over a tambour frame, embroidering' (Violet Biddulph, *The Three Ladies Waldegrave*, 1938, p. 155).

24. This picture seems never to have been painted.

25. On 17 April 1780 the English and French fleets fought for three hours north-west of Martinique. The commander of the English fleet, Sir George Brydges Rodney, dispatched an account of the engagement, dated 26 April 1780, which was published in part in the *London Gazette Extraordinary* 25 May 1780. Rodney listed his losses as 120 killed, 353 wounded. The French reported 222 killed, 537 wounded (W. M. James, *The British Navy in Adversity*, 1926, p. 204; *Sandwich Papers* iii. 157–60).

26. 'At the conclusion of the battle the enemy might be said to be completely beat' (*London Gazette Extraordinary* 25 May 1780). HW's suspicion echoes the suspicions of the Opposition press, such as the comments on the ministerial suppression of facts in the *London Courant* 27 May 1780. The ministry was accused of suppressing parts of Rodney's letter, and on 26 May efforts were made in the House of Commons to have the letter laid before the House, but they proved unavailing (*Corr. Geo.* III v. 65–6).

27. Sir George Brydges Rodney (1719–92), cr. (1764) Bt, and (1782) Bn Rodney of Rodney Stoke; Adm., 1778. In September 1779 Rodney had been appointed to the command of the Leeward Islands station, and on his way to his post had defeated a Spanish fleet and relieved Gibraltar and Minorca, thus becoming a popular national hero.

28. 'Sir George Rodney, in his letter, from whence the *Gazette* account is garbled, complains heavily of several of his captains, and makes no scruple of declaring that had his signals been properly obeyed, he had no doubt of taking and destroying many of the French ships' (*London Courant* 27 May 1780).

29. 'Guichen [the French commander] stood on to the northward, followed by Rodney as well as his foul and crippled ships allowed him. After four or five days he gave it up and went back, hoping to waylay the French on their return to Fort Royal, but the state of his ships forced him into harbour at the end of the month' (*Sandwich Papers* iii. 158).

Barrington<sup>30</sup> when he refused the command on Hardy's death asked where our fleet was, and our seamen and our discipline!<sup>31</sup>

Lord Sandwich is resuscitating Sir Hugh Palisser;<sup>32</sup> he toasted him at the dinner of the Trinity House,<sup>33</sup> etc. Mr Courtney<sup>34</sup> refused to drink it. Palisser has since been at Court.

I shall tell you a *bon mot* of Soame Jenyns, who by the way has been half killed at the nomination of members for Cambridgeshire,<sup>36</sup> and then reserve the rest of my paper till I go to town. Seeing some members pairing off in the Speaker's chamber, he said, 'I think there are no happy pairs now in England, but those who pair here.'

Sir W. Chambers has reappeared, and been at the Royal Academy. His absence is now said to have been an *équipée* of gallantry. One would think you or I cared extremely about Sir William when he makes so many paragraphs in my letters; but I hate to write lies and had rather be tiresome than false.

31st.

I have been in town for the birthday of the little Princess of our little court,<sup>37</sup> but heard no news, so am in no hurry to send away my letter. The Chancellor has been dying, and thinks himself that he shall not be able to keep the seals, though the physicians do not de-

30. Samuel Barrington (1729-1800); Rear-Adm., 1778, Vice-Adm., 1781, Adm., 1787.

31. Barrington refused the command on the grounds that it should go to Keppel, and that he did not personally feel able to overcome the difficulties produced by bad administration, poor training, and lack of discipline (Barrington's memorandum of his talk with Sandwich, [19 May] 1780, printed in *The Mariner's Mirror*, 1934, xx. 67-8, and Sandwich to the King 20 May 1780, printed in *Corr. Geo. III* v. 62). After Barrington's refusal the appointment was given to Admiral Francis Geary (*Sandwich Papers* iii. 279-80).

32. 'Lord Sandwich is repeating his attempts to bring forward Sir Hugh Palliser; but he may rest assured, that neither his own arts, nor the industry of his hirelings, will ever be able to force him on the navy' (*London Courant* 24 May 1780).

33. 'At the dinner of the Brethren of

the Trinity House, Lord Sandwich not only had the impudence to insult the company by proposing Sir Hugh Palliser's health, but followed up the insult with three cheers' (*London Courant* 25 May 1780). The Trinity House Corporation is in charge of the regulation of aids to navigation, the general management of all nautical matters not immediately connected with the Admiralty, and the administration of a charity fund for the relief of pilots, seamen, and their families.

34. John Courtenay (1741-1816), politician and poetaster; M. P. Tamworth 1780-96, Appleby 1796-1807.

36. An account of the electioneering tumult and of Jenyns's difficulties was given HW by Cole in his letter of 24 May 1780 (COLE ii. 219).

37. Princess Sophia Matilda, first child of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, born 29 May 1773.

spair of him.<sup>38</sup> I was told that the conclusion of Rodney's letter had these words: 'It was the most melancholy day for England I ever saw.'<sup>39</sup> That was a bold assertion. There is a notion that Admiral Parker<sup>40</sup> and his division Palissered Rodney,<sup>41</sup> both<sup>42</sup> *Iliacos intra muros et extra*.<sup>43</sup>

There is just published a dialogue of Rousseau, the title of which is *Rousseau juge Jean-Jacques*.<sup>44</sup> There are fine strokes of eloquence you may be certain and much address in the management of the argument, which is to confute the charges of his enemies; but the groundwork is his old frenzy, composed of vanity and suspicions. He asserts that there is a universal plot against him composed of the *philosophes*, clergy, his own friends and everybody else, headed by the French government, and supported at great expense; and that the whole world is sworn to keep a profound secret from him all that is said against him, though by somebody's perjury he knows it all,<sup>45</sup> and moreover the plot is proved by one of the interlocutors of

38. Various reports of Lord Thurlow's ill-health appeared in the newspapers at this time, e.g., *London Courant* 9, 13, 20, 26, and 27 May 1780. The latest report announced 'a sudden relapse,' but Thurlow held the seals until 1783.

39. The *London Courant* 30 May 1780 printed a sentence rumoured to have been omitted from Rodney's letter: 'It is with the greatest grief of heart that I am constrained to say, that the honour of the British flag never received such a tarnish as on this day.' HW had apparently heard a similar version. Rodney's actual words were: "'Tis with concern inexpressible, mixed with indignation, that the duty I owe my sovereign and my country obliges me to acquaint your Lordships that during the action with the French fleet on the 17th instant his Majesty's—the British flag—was not properly supported' (W. M. James, op. cit. 205). See G. B. Mundy, *The Life and Correspondence of the late Admiral Lord Rodney*, 1830, i. 305-6.

40. Sir Hyde Parker (1714-82), 5th Bt, 1782; Vice-Adm., 1780. Parker was a divisional leader under Rodney in the West Indies and commanded the van in the engagement of 17 April (James, op. cit. 441).

41. Disobeyed orders, as Palliser disobeyed Keppel's in the battle of Ushant. See *ante* 25 Aug. 1778. The reports that

Rodney was enraged at the failure of his divisional leaders to carry out tactical plans proved to be true, but it appears that Rodney's orders were not clear (*Sandwich Papers* iii. 158-60, 211-2, 215-8; James, op. cit. 205-8; David Hannay, *Rodney*, 1891, pp. 126-32).

42. Mitford reads 'but': the emendation was suggested by John Sargeaunt in TLS 13 May 1920.

43. 'Seditione, dolis, scelere atque libidine et ira

*Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra*' ('Both within and without the walls of Troy men sin through sedition, treachery, felony, lust, and wrath') (Horace, *Epistles* I. ii. 15-16).

44. Publication of *Rousseau juge de Jean-Jacques* was announced in *Public Advertiser* 26 May 1780. This first edition, containing only the first of the three dialogues which make up the complete book, was published by Brooke Boothby, in whose hands the manuscript had been left by Rousseau. The full text was first published in the collected *Œuvres* of Rousseau, 1782. See Théophile Dufour, *Recherches bibliographiques sur les œuvres imprimées de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 1925, i. 242-7.

45. A not unfair summary of what Rousseau says in the long passage beginning, 'Il est une autre explication plus naturelle

the dialogue allowing it to be true.<sup>46</sup> Lord Harcourt himself allows it is a very odd book and certainly Rousseau's, and yet I think is sorry it is.

If the clergy, and *philosophes* and French administration can all unite in any one point, there is a little more art in France than in England.

June 2nd.

I have this minute received your letter but cannot satisfy your curiosity. I know, nor shall know more of Rodney's story or Mr Strutt's<sup>47</sup> than I, and consequently you, can see in the papers. I have done with London<sup>48</sup> for this season and have no correspondent there, and shall seldom visit it. My days are drawing to a conclusion, and I wish to pass them with as little pain as I can and with as little vexation; consequently, politics can but disturb them. You tell me that of two extreme evils one must. . . .<sup>49</sup> I own that is not my opinion. I think we shall dwindle into an insignificant single island and in which stupidity may at last settle into despotism; but I think there is not only not spirit, but not sense enough anywhere to bring the contest to an immediate decision, and since we have neither wisdom nor virtue left I hope not, for I am convinced that only the few good men amongst us would be the victims. I shall go to Malvern in July for a month or six weeks,<sup>50</sup> and visit Nuneham in autumn if I am well enough. Adieu.

. . . C'est de supposer une ligue dont l'objet est la diffamation de J.-J.' (pp. 135-42).

46. The dialogue takes place between Rousseau (not the author personally involved in controversial matters, but a Rousseau who is able to view his actions and works objectively) and 'le Français.' 'Mais ici cette ligue existe, rien n'est plus constant; vous me l'avez appris vous-même' (p. 136).

47. John Strutt (1727-1816), M.P. for Maldon 1774-90 (GEC *sub* Rayleigh; *Mem-*

*bers of Parliament*, pt ii, 1878, pp. 151, 164, 178, 190). See the following letter.

48. In Mitford the foregoing is printed: '—cannot satisfy your curiosity I know, nor shall know more of Rodney's story or Mr Strutt's till then. I, and consequently you, can see in the papers I have done with London,' etc. The emendation is Cunningham's.

49. 'A word [prevail] is here torn out from the MS, with a broken seal' (Mitford's note).

50. HW did not go (*post* 15 July 1780).

## From MASON, Wednesday 31 May 1780

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WORKSOP 2 JU. FREE.

Aston, May 31st, 1780.

A THOUSAND thanks for the charming Druid mug which I received yesterday, and the long and excellent letter which accompanied it. I have to thank you also for another letter by the post,<sup>1</sup> in which though you think my political scheme tends to inhumanity I heartily forgive you. Yet depend upon it, matters are now growing so near a crisis, that (whatever may be either your or my opinions) despotism or a struggle against it, and a warm one too, will be to be expected. Tame submission will indeed spare present bloodshed—but—you can make the inference, without my assistance.

I have neither seen *Royal Reflections* nor Garrick's life, nor the ode which without telling me its name you ascribe to S. Jennyns; were it certainly his perhaps it would be worth a few strictures. I shall look for it in the booksellers' shops at York, whither I am immediately going in my way into the North Riding, where I shall make a few visits and return hither the beginning of July. But pray continue your directions hither, as my curate will know how to forward all letters to me by the very same post that brings them. I shall be curious to know how Lord John Cavendish votes on Strutt's bill for increasing Parliamentary qualifications.<sup>2</sup> He ought on his own principles to vote for it,<sup>3</sup> and yet the papers tell me it is brought in to disqualify Charles Fox, Burke,<sup>4</sup> etc., from sitting in the next Parlia-

1. That of 24 May. The letter of 19 May had not been sent by post.

2. 'A bill to explain and amend the several acts for securing the freedom of Parliament by farther extending the qualification for members to sit in the House of Commons' was introduced by John Strutt 27 April 1780 (*Journals of the House of Commons* xxxvii. 804). The property qualification that was to be explained and amended was the possession of a landed estate of £300 a year. The bill was referred to a committee of the whole House and was debated but did not come to a vote (*ibid.* xxxvii. 918; Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.*

xxi. 623-6; Sir William R. Anson, *The Law and Custom of the Constitution. Vol. I: Parliament*, 1909, p. 94).

3. The Rockingham faction, with which Cavendish was closely associated, 'clung to an aristocratic monopoly' (G. H. Guttridge, *English Whiggism and the American Revolution*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1942, p. 33).

4. Who were Cavendish's friends. Fox's financial embarrassment was particularly acute at this time, and Burke 'from 1769 onwards . . . was never free from difficulties' (William Hunt in *DNB*).



ment. I hope very soon to have an interesting letter from you on Rodney's disobedient captains, I trust they are all Lord Sandwich's dearest friends.<sup>5</sup> Accounts from Charlestown<sup>6</sup> too I think must come

either  $\left\{ \begin{array}{cc} \text{good} & \text{bad} \\ \text{or} & \text{or} \\ \text{bad} & \text{good} \end{array} \right\}$ —shuffle the words and then cut them, and choose which you please for trumps.

Addio.

TO MASON, Sunday 4 June 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 100–3.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, June 4, 1780.

**I** WENT to town on Friday for a private supper,<sup>1</sup> to which I was engaged. There I found your letter, finished mine and put it into the post, and went out; and it was past eight at night before I heard a syllable of the prodigious tumult at Westminster.<sup>2</sup> All yesterday I had not a minute's time to write you a line, so you will have seen all the particulars in the common papers. Miraculously no lives were lost, nor was part of the town burnt, as it was near being, for the mob not only set on fire the Sardinian minister's chapel,<sup>3</sup> but, till

5. Even Rodney did not 'think that party views or attachment to particular officers had any influence in the events of that day' (*Sandwich Papers* iii. 212).

6. An expedition against Charleston, South Carolina, led by Gen. Sir Henry Clinton and Vice-Adm. Marriot Arbuthnot, had sailed from New York 26 Dec. 1779 (*Annual Register*, 1780, xxiii. 217\*–8\*). Various reports and speculations concerning the siege of Charleston appeared in the newspapers late in May 1780, but it was not until 15 June that the *London Gazette* published Clinton's account of the surrender on 11 May.

1. At Gloucester House (HW to Lady Ossory 3 June 1780).

2. The beginning of the Gordon riots. The repeal of certain disabilities of Roman Catholics in 1778 (*ante* 15 May 1778) led to the formation of a Protestant As-

sociation of which Lord George Gordon was elected president. Late in May a petition for the cancellation of the toleration act of 1778 was drawn up, and on 2 June 'Lord George Gordon, after giving notice of his intention in the House of Commons, and by public summons in advertisements, went to the House at the head of a vast multitude calling themselves the Protestant Association, and presented a petition with an immense volume of names. A prodigious riot began . . .' (*Last Journals* ii. 306). The text of the petition and an account of the attendant events is given in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 654–9. See J. Paul de Castro, *The Gordon Riots*, 1926.

3. The chapel of SS. Anselm and Cecilia in Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields (now Sardinia Street). The chapels of the representatives of foreign nations were not subject to English laws against Roman Catholic places of worship and had for

the guards arrived, would not suffer the engines to play on it.<sup>4</sup> Nothing ever surpassed the abominable behaviour of the ruffian apostle that preached up this storm. I always, you know well, disliked and condemned the repeal of the popish statutes, and am steadfast in that opinion, but I abhor such Protestantism as breathes the soul of popery, and commences a reformation by attempting a massacre. The frantic incendiary ran backwards and forwards naming names for slaughter to the mob:<sup>5</sup> fortunately his disciples were not expert at assassination, and nobody was murdered for the gospel's sake. So blind was his zeal, and so ill-tutored his outlaws, that though the petition was addressed and carried to the House of Commons, the chief fury fell on the peers,<sup>6</sup> and on some of the most inoffensive, as Lord Willoughby<sup>7</sup> and Lord Boston,<sup>8</sup> the latter of whom was thrown down and trampled on, and had a most narrow escape.<sup>9</sup> The demolition of two chapels of foreign ministers,<sup>10</sup> which they enjoy by the law of nations, and did enjoy before the repeal, is another savage out-

years been frequented by London Catholics. 'About ten o'clock [at night] the mob . . . went to the Roman Catholic chapel in Lincoln's Inn Fields, all the windows of which they broke to pieces, and entirely destroyed the inside; the ornaments, etc. they threw into the streets and there burned them.—The fire in the street, communicated to the building, the inside of which, by twelve o'clock, was totally consumed' (*London Chronicle* 1–3 June 1780, xlvii. 536). See *Last Journals* ii. 307 and De Castro, op. cit. 43–4. The Sardinian envoy at this time was Vittorio Amadeo Sallier de la Tour, Marchese di Cordon (see HW to Lady Browne 18 Dec. 1778).

4. 'During the fire, some engines came, which played upon the adjacent houses, to prevent their catching fire, but the mob would not suffer them play on the chapel' (*London Chronicle* 1–3 June 1780). The fire-engines of eighteenth-century London were owned and operated by the fire-insurance companies (De Castro, op. cit. 137).

5. 'Lord George Gordon, during these unwarrantable proceedings, came several times to the top of the gallery stairs, whence he harangued the people, and informed them of the bad success their petition was like to meet with, and marked out such members as were opposing it, particularly Mr Burke, the member for Bristol' (Cob-

bett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 657). See De Castro, pp. 39–40. According to some accounts, Gordon reported the progress of the debate to his followers, but also tried to keep the mob pacified (GM 1780, I. 267). In his letter to Mann 5 June 1780 HW said that though Lord George 'had given out most Christian injunctions for peaceable behaviour, he did everything in his power to promote a massacre.'

6. 'It happened, perhaps, rather by accident than by design, that the Lords met with worse treatment than the Commons' (GM 1780, I. 266). Details of the rough treatment given the peers by the mob may be found in GM, loc. cit., Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 665, *Last Journals* ii. 306, De Castro, pp. 34–8, and in the newspapers.

7. John Verney (later Peyto-Verney) (1738–1816), 14th Bn Willoughby de Broke, 1752.

8. Frederick Irby (1749–1825), 2d Bn Boston, 1775.

9. Lord Montfort 'thought it his duty to rise and acquaint their Lordships of the perilous situation one of their own members stood in at that instant, he meant Lord Boston, whom the mob had dragged out of his coach, and were most cruelly maltreating' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 668–9).

10. The Bavarian chapel was also pilaged. 'About twelve o'clock the same

rage, and I suppose will throw the King of Sardinia<sup>11</sup> into the general league against us. One may hope I trust that the universal detestation which the Gordon has drawn on himself, will disarm his farther power of mischief, though a statute of lunacy ought to be his doom. Colonel Murray,<sup>12</sup> uncle of the Duke of Athol,<sup>13</sup> said to him in the House of Commons, 'I see many lives will be lost, but, by God, yours shall be one of them.'<sup>14</sup> Some of the coolest of the members have told me that there was one moment in which they thought they should be forced to open the doors of the House and fight their way out, sword in hand, as their only chance of safety.<sup>15</sup>

The wretch had marked the Duke of Richmond to the populace for sacrifice, and they called for him, but the greater part, not knowing on what view, echoed the sound, and called for *the noble Duke of Richmond*. Lord Mahon counteracted the incendiary, and chiefly contributed by his harangues to conjure down the tempest.

What steps are to be taken I do not know, what preventive measures were taken are to be summed up thus: the cabinet council, on Thursday, authorized Lord North to prepare the civil officers to keep the peace, and *he forgot it* till two o'clock at noon, some hours after the procession had begun to march.<sup>16</sup>

party [as that which attacked the Sardinian chapel], or another, went to the Roman Catholic chapel in Warwick Street, Golden Square, which they stripped in the same manner of the various ornaments, books, etc. and made a bonfire of them in the street, but did not set fire to the building' (*London Chronicle* 1-3 June 1780). See De Castro, p. 47. The Bavarian minister from 1741 to 1783 was Joseph Xavier (ca 1700-83), Freiherr (later Graf) von Haszlang (MONTAGU i. 185 n. 25).

11. Vittorio Amadeo III (1726-96), King of Sardinia and Duke of Savoy 1773-96.

12. James Murray (1734-94) of Strowan, brother of John, 3d D. of Atholl; lieutenant in the Saxon army 1749-57; captain in the British army, 1757; Col., 1777; governor of Fort William, 1780; Maj.-Gen., 1782; M. P. Perth 1773-80, 1784-94 (*Scots Peerage* i. 484).

13. John Murray (1755-1830), 4th D. of Atholl (S.), 1774; cr. (1786) Bn Murray of Stanley, co. Glos, and E. Strange; governor of Isle of Man, 1793; Lord Lieutenant of Perth 1794-1830; P.C., 1797.

14. 'It cannot be doubted that if the

populace had forced their way into the House of Commons, Lord George would not have survived to recount the exploit. Many members who were there present, justly indignant at his conduct, threatened him with instant death, as soon as any of the rioters should burst open the doors. . . . General Murray, uncle to the present Duke of Athol, a man whom I intimately knew, and who, when incensed, was capable of executing the most desperate resolution, held his sword ready to pass it through Lord George's body, on the first irruption of the mob' (Sir N. W. Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs of His Own Time*, 1836, i. 363-4). See *Last Journals* ii. 306-7; Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 657.

15. 'Mr Conway and Lord Frederick Cavendish, with whom I supped afterwards, told me there was a moment when they thought they must have opened the doors and fought their way out sword in hand' (HW to Lady Ossory 3 June 1780).

16. The remissness of the ministry in making effective preparations for the control of the assembly of the Protestant Association on the day of the presentation

Well, here is a religious war added to all our civil and foreign wars, enough surely to gorge Bellona herself, and to throw open the most promising field to France. If these evils could be enhanced, they would be by the confusion of jarring interests and opinions that cross one another in every possible direction. The Duke of Richmond, who you and I lament is for toleration of popery, will please *you* by having yesterday offered a bill for annual Parliaments,<sup>17</sup> and is gone out of town today, disgusted at its being rejected.<sup>18</sup> Yet, though I differ with him on both points, I worship his thousand virtues beyond any man's: he is intrepid and tender, inflexible and humane beyond example. I do not know which is most amiable, his heart or his conscience. He ought too to be the great model to all our factions. No difference in sentiments between him and his friends makes the slightest impression on his attachment to them; but like many models, he will not be imitated. I recommend his example a little to you yourself, my good Sir, because the only little good I can hope to do while I remain here, is to conciliate my friends, whose great outlines are the same, though the folds of their garments may flow in different styles. You seem too much estranged from Lord John;<sup>19</sup> I have often disagreed with him, but always honoured his integrity: surely that is the fountain of principles; whatever has grown on his margin, the source has remained limpid and undefiled. You despise my weariness and palsied chill of age, but I take nothing ill of a friend. I stand on the threshold of both worlds, and look back and forwards for this poor country with fond eyes, and think that nothing can redeem it, even in part, but sober and well poised virtue. Violence, unsupported by general national union, will, like Lord [George] Gordon's frenzy, but precipitate destruction, and in its progress be imbued with every act of injustice. That lunatic, whom I should less severely condemn if I saw nothing in him but lunacy, is

of Gordon's petition was the subject of much debate and conflicting testimony in the House of Lords 3 June 1780. See Cobbett's *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 673-86.

17. 'An act for declaring and restoring the natural, unalienable and equal right of all the commons of Great Britain (infants, persons of insane mind, and criminals incapacitated by law only excepted) to vote in the election of their representatives in Parliament; for regulating the

mode and manner of such elections; for restoring annual Parliaments, for giving an hereditary seat to the sixteen peers which shall be elected for Scotland, and for establishing more equitable regulations, concerning the peerage of Scotland' was moved by Richmond 3 June 1780 (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 686).

18. *Ibid.* xxi. 688.

19. Cavendish.

horridly black in my eyes, for you know it is my most conscientious opinion that no man has a right to expose any life but his own on any disputable tenet in religion or government, still less on suspicions or jealousies; but I wander, from indignation against him, and will finish lest I dissert, instead of amusing you with news. In vain I try to steep my senses in oblivion, and to lull the remaining hours. Such shocks as Friday's agitate all my sensibility. Jesus! if the Duke of Richmond had fallen a victim to a blind tumult, in which half the sacrificers devoted him to the Furies, while half adored him.

## TO MASON, Friday 9 June 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 104-9.

Strawberry Hill, June 9, at night, 1780.

I HAVE not had a moment's time or one calm enough to write you a single line and now am not only fatigued, but know not where to begin, or how to arrange the thousand things I have in my mind. If I am incoherent you must excuse it, and accept whatever presents itself.

I could not bear to sit here in shameful selfish philosophy, and hear the million of reports, and know almost all I loved in danger, without sharing it. I went to town on Wednesday, and though the night was the most horrible I ever beheld, I would not take millions not to have been present; and should I have seen the conflagration as I must from these windows, I should have been distracted for my friends. At nine at night on notice of fire, I went with the Duchess and her daughters to the top of Gloucester House<sup>1</sup> and thence beheld the King's Bench,<sup>2</sup> which was a little town,<sup>3</sup> and at a distance the New Prison<sup>4</sup> in flames. At past ten I went to General Conway's, in a moment we were alarmed by the servants, and rushing to the

1. In Upper Grosvenor Street.

2. The King's Bench prison, Southwark, at the junction of Blackman Street and the Newington causeway. It was rebuilt on the same site, and was razed in 1879 (*London Past and Present* ii. 340).

3. That is, in appearance, because of the numerous small buildings within the

walls. See De Castro, *Gordon Riots*, p. 28.

4. HW apparently means the New Bridewell, Fleet Street. 'Early in the evening [7 June] . . . the King's Bench prison, with the three houses adjoining, the tavern behind, and the New Bridewell, were in flames and totally destroyed' (*London Courant* 9 June 1780).

street-door saw through Little Warwick Street such an universal blaze, that I had no doubt the Mews,<sup>5</sup> at least St Martin's Lane<sup>6</sup> was on fire. Mr Conway ran and I limped after him to Charing Cross, but though seemingly close, it was no nearer than the Fleet market;<sup>7</sup> at past twelve I went up to Lord Hertford's,<sup>8</sup> two of his sons<sup>9</sup> came in from the bridge at Blackfriars, where they had seen the toll-houses plundered and burnt.<sup>10</sup> Instantly arrived their cook, a German Protestant with a child in his arms, and all we could gather was that the mob was in possession of his house, had burnt his furniture and had obliged him to abandon his wife and another child. I sent my own footman for it was only in Woodstock Street,<sup>11</sup> and he soon returned and said it had been only some apprentices who supposed him a papist on his not illuminating his house, and that three of them and an Irish Catholic chairman had been secured, but the poor man has lost his all! I drove from one place to another till two, but did not go to bed till between three and four, and ere asleep heard a troop of horse gallop by. My printer<sup>12</sup> whom I had sent out for intelligence came not home till past nine the next morning, I feared he was killed, but then I heard of such a scene. He had beheld three sides of the Fleet market in flames, Barnard's Inn<sup>13</sup> at one end,<sup>14</sup> the prison on one side<sup>15</sup> and the distiller's<sup>16</sup> on the other, besides Fetter and Shoe Lanes, with such horrors of distraction, distress etc., as are not to be described; besides accounts of slaughter near the Bank.<sup>17</sup> The en-

5. The royal stables at Charing Cross, on the site of the present Trafalgar Square.

6. Then a street of fashionable residences.

7. A similar account appears in Sir N. W. Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs*, 1836, i. 338-9.

8. In Grosvenor Street.

9. Hon. Henry (1746-1830) and Hon. William Conway (later Seymour-Conway) (1760-1837). See Burke, *Peerage*, 1928, pp. 1204-5; Collins, *Peerage*, 1812, ii. 564-6; HW to Lady Ossory 7 June 1780.

10. 'The toll of a halfpenny charged to all who crossed Blackfriars Bridge had long been a source of grievance to the populace. The present upheaval was opportune for demonstrating their disapproval. Flames were carried from Fleet Prison to the toll-gatherers' houses. These were fired and soon reduced to ashes, large stocks of halfpence being first confiscated by the mob' (De Castro, *op. cit.* 138).

11. South of Oxford Street and west of New Bond Street.

12. Kirgate.

13. An Inn of Chancery, originally affiliated with Gray's Inn. See William Ralph Douthwaite, *Gray's Inn: Its History and Associations*, 1886, pp. 257-9.

14. Barnard's Inn is actually at Fetter Lane, south of Holborn.

15. The Fleet prison, which was destroyed in the fire, was on the east side of the market.

16. Thomas Langdale (ca 1713-90), owner of a large distillery on Holborn Hill (GM 1790, lx pt ii. 1151). He was reputed to be a Catholic. The destruction of the distillery is described by De Castro pp. 131-2, and Wraxall i. 336-7.

17. 'At the Royal Exchange, and about the Mansion House, the conflict between the soldiers and the populace was very severe. Numbers of the latter having collected themselves there with a view, as is

gines were cut to pieces,<sup>18</sup> and a dozen or fourteen different parts were burning.<sup>19</sup> It is incredible that so few houses and buildings in comparison are in ashes. The papers must tell you other details and of what preceded the total demolition of Lord Mansfield's,<sup>20</sup> etc.

Yesterday was some slaughter in Fleet Street by the Horse Guards<sup>21</sup> and more in St George's Fields by the Protestant Association, who fell on the rioters,<sup>22</sup> who appear to have been chiefly apprentices, convicts and all kinds of desperadoes, for popery is already out of the question, and plunder all the object. They have exacted sums from many houses to avoid being burnt as popish.<sup>23</sup> The ringleader

said, of attempting the Bank, a large body of troops having been previously assembled for its protection, they fired repeated volleys upon the people, many of whom were killed' (*London Courant* 9 June 1780). Two attacks were made on the Bank of England, the first on Wednesday between eleven and twelve at night, the second during the early hours of Thursday morning. Both were successfully repulsed. See De Castro, pp. 141-4, 154, 158. There are no accurate figures for the number of the dead and wounded. 'The carnage which took place at the Bank likewise was great, though not of very long duration; and in order to conceal as much as possible the magnitude of the number . . . similar precautions were taken on both sides. All the dead bodies being carried away during the night, were precipitated into the river. . . . Government and the rioters seem to have felt an equal disposition, by drawing a veil over the extent of the calamity, to bury it in profound darkness' (Wraxall, op. cit. i. 350-1).

18. 'During the fire at the Fleet prison an engine from the Royal Exchange Company was sent down to endeavour to quell the fire; the engine was immediately committed to the flames' (*Lloyd's Evening Post* 7-9 June 1780, xlv. 550).

19. 'Wednesday night there were no less than fourteen places on fire at one time, in different parts of the town' (*Public Advertiser* 9 June 1780). See HW to Harcourt 10 June 1780.

20. 'About eleven o'clock [at night, 6 June 1780], a very large body attacked Earl Mansfield's house in Bloomsbury Square, the furniture of which took them a long time destroying. In this employment they were sometimes disturbed by a detachment

of horse and foot soldiers, who appeared and retired again, till another party came to the spot, attended by a justice, who ordered the men to fire. This being done, they killed four men and one woman, besides dangerously wounding several others. After this, the mob set the house on fire, when there being two engines arrived, the firemen refused to play till the soldiers were removed. This being complied with, the mob would not suffer them to play till it was reduced to ashes, but did not hinder them from playing on Mr Baron Hotham's house [next to Mansfield's], which was thus preserved' (*Lloyd's Evening Post* 5-7 June 1780, xlv. 543). Mansfield's persistent advocacy of religious toleration made him particularly obnoxious to the mob. He and his family were at home when the rioters came, but escaped; valuable books, manuscripts, and pictures were destroyed in the fire. A later attack was made on Mansfield's country house, Kenwood, but this was repulsed.

21. 'Yesterday afternoon a detachment of horse and foot took fifteen of the rioters in the Fleet prison ruins. . . . Another party surprised a great number of the rioters in the same place, some of whom they wounded, and took them all into custody' (*London Courant* 9 June 1780). HW gives a more circumstantial account of this episode in his letter to Lady Ossory 9 June 1780.

22. On Thursday there were a few skirmishes in Southwark (De Castro, pp. 171-2), but corroboration of this story concerning the Protestant Association has not been found. HW reported it as a rumour to Lady Ossory 9 June 1780.

23. 'Applications were . . . made at many private houses for money, which the

Lord George is fled.<sup>24</sup> The Bank, the destruction of all prisons and of the Inns of Court, were the principal aims.

The magistrates, intimidated by demolition of Fielding's and Justice Hyde's houses,<sup>25</sup> did not dare to act. A general council was summoned at Buckingham House at which the twelve judges attended.<sup>26</sup> It was determined not to shut up the courts but to order military execution.<sup>27</sup> Both Houses are adjourned to Monday sevensnight<sup>28</sup> which hurt General Conway so much, who intended yesterday to move for the repeal of the toleration and found the House adjourned before he could get to it,<sup>29</sup> though early, that he is gone out of town.

The night passed quietly, and by this evening there will be eighteen thousand men in and round the town.<sup>30</sup> As yet there are more

inhabitants, for fear of bad consequences, complied with' (*Public Advertiser* 9 June 1780).

24. HW was wrong. See below, n. 49.

25. On 6 June the mob burned the house in Bow Street of Sir John Fielding (1721–80), the magistrate, half-brother of the novelist, and also the house in St Martin's Street of William Hyde (d. 1805), of the commission of peace for Middlesex. The mob attacked Hyde because he was a magistrate, and also because he had exercised his prerogatives and summoned the Horse Guards to take action against some of the rioters. On the following night Hyde's house at Islington was also destroyed. See Constance Hill, *The House in St Martin's Street: Being Chronicles of the Burney Family*, 1907, pp. 256–60; De Castro, pp. 82–6 and 122; GM 1805, lxxv pt ii. 880; Charles James Fèret, *Fulham Old and New*, 1900, ii. 68–9.

26. The judges of the courts of the King's Bench, Common Pleas, and of the Exchequer. According to *Last Journals*, Lord Mansfield, chief justice of the King's Bench, and Sir William de Grey, chief justice of Common Pleas, did not attend (ii. 310–1).

27. 'That evening [7 June] a grand privy council and the judges were summoned at the Queen's House, and the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General. . . . The judges being asked if the riots would authorize shutting up the courts of justice and declaring military law, Judge Gould alone said there was not enough to authorize either. The Lord President Bathurst,

though then fuddled, persuaded the King not to make Gould too popular by contradicting him; on which it was determined not to shut up the courts nor proclaim martial law, but to empower the military to act at their discretion' (*Last Journals* ii. 310–1). This would seem to have been the advice of Wedderburn, the Attorney-General, who had given it as his opinion that a riotous assembly might be dispersed by military force without waiting for forms or the reading of the Riot Act (Wraxall, op. cit. i. 356). The decision of the Council was embodied in a royal proclamation dated 7 June and published in the newspapers on Friday 9 June. The placing of discretionary powers in the hands of the military occasioned some alarm. See Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 690–8; De Castro, pp. 172–4, 203–8.

28. 19 June. HW proved to be right, but when he wrote this letter only the House of Commons had adjourned to 19 June. On 7 June the Lords adjourned to the 12th, but later postponed the adjournment another week. (*Public Advertiser* 8, 9, and 13 June 1780).

29. 'June 8. The Speaker, attended by a sufficient number of members to authorize his taking the chair, went down to Westminster so early as twelve o'clock, and opened the House; immediately on which Mr Dundas arose, and . . . moved that the House should be adjourned to the 19th' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 664).

30. Troops of the regular army and of the militia. According to De Castro (p. 263),



persons killed by drinking than by ball or bayonet. At the great popish distiller's they swallowed spirits of all kinds, and Kirgate saw men and women lying dead in the streets under barrows as he came home yesterday.<sup>31</sup>

We have now, superabundantly, to fear robbery, 300 desperate villains were released from Newgate.<sup>32</sup> Lady Albemarle<sup>33</sup> was robbed at Mrs Keppel's<sup>34</sup> door in Pall Mall at twelve at night. Baron d'Aguilar's<sup>35</sup> coach was shot at here last night close to the Crown.

I have so much exerted my no strength, and had so little sleep these two nights, that I came hither today for some rest. It will be but *grim repose*. It is said that this insurrection was expected in France a month ago. Just as I came away Mr Griffith<sup>36</sup> told me the French were embarking. In short what may not be expected? then one turns from what is to come, to helpless misery, that will soon be forgotten but by the sufferers. Whole families ruined, wives that tried to drag their husbands out of the mobs and have found them breathless, the terrors of the Catholics, indeed of all foreigners, but one. That Scythian heroine the Princess Daskiou<sup>37</sup> is here, her natural brother

on 9 June there were, in or near London, 11,443 troops. But since many voluntary defence associations had also armed themselves, HW's estimate may not have been unreasonably high.

31. 'But powder and ball do not seem to have been so fatal to them as their own inordinate appetites. Numbers, it is said, and at various places, died with inebriation, especially at the distilleries of the unfortunate Mr Langdale, from whose vessels the liquor ran down the middle of the street, was taken up by pailfuls, and held to the mouths of the besotted multitude; many of whom killed themselves with drinking non-rectified spirits, and were burnt or buried in the ruins' (William Vincent [i.e., Thomas Holcroft], *A Plain and Succinct Narrative of the Late Riots and Disturbances*, 2d edn, 1780, p. 36).

32. On 6 June Newgate was sacked by the mob, and 'every prisoner in the place made his escape, to the amount of about three hundred, including the four convicts under sentence of death, and who were to be executed tomorrow' (*Lloyd's Evening Post* 5-7 June 1780, xlv. 542).

33. Lady Anne Lennox (1703-89), m.

(1723) William Anne Van Keppel, 2d E. of Albemarle.

34. HW's niece, Laura Walpole (ca 1734-1813), m. (1758) Hon. Frederick Keppel, Bp of Exeter.

35. Ephraim Lopez Pereira (ca 1740-1802), Baron d'Aguilar (of Portugal), 1759; wealthy and eccentric Portuguese Jew, born in Vienna and naturalized in England (1757). At this time he had a country house at Twickenham. See John Nelson, *The History, Topography, and Antiquities of the Parish of St Mary Islington*, 1811, pp. 386-92.

36. Presumably Richard Griffith. See *ante* 11 Oct. 1778.

37. Ekaterina Romanovna Vorontsova (1743-1810), m. (1759) Prince Mikhail Dashkov; Russian littérateuse and friend of Catherine the Great; director of the Academy of Arts and Sciences in St Petersburg 1782-96; first president of the Russian Academy 1784-96. See *Memoirs of the Princess Daschkaw, Lady of Honour to Catherine II . . . Written by Herself*, ed. Mrs William Bradford (Martha Wilmot), 1840; *The Russian Journals of Martha and Catherine Wilmot*, ed. the Marchioness of

Rantzau<sup>38</sup> was taken in Mons. Cordon's chapel, and was reclaimed by Simonin,<sup>39</sup> and released; *she* herself on Wednesday, I *know* sent Lord Ashburnham<sup>40</sup> word that his house was marked for destruction, merciful tigress!<sup>41</sup> it is proof he is not an emperor.<sup>42</sup>

My bosom I think, does not want humanity, yet I cannot feel pity for Lord Mansfield. I did feel joy for the four convicts who were released from Newgate within twenty-four hours of their execution,<sup>43</sup> but ought not a man to be taught sensibility, who drove us cross the Rubicon?<sup>44</sup> I would not hurt a hair of his head: but if I sigh for the afflicted innocent, can I blend him with them?

You will call me fool in your own mind, and tell yourself that a week ago I announced that national lethargy would doze into despotism.<sup>45</sup> I have long known how short-sighted my penetration is, I allow all you can think of my littleness of mind. However, I would not change a mean understanding or a want of spirit for anything I hold to be wrong, nor think, I beg you, that by that assertion I pretend to any goodness. I am often guilty, but it is not with tranquillity, nor from my soul being steeled against remorse, still less do I condemn others who act what they think right, or doubt the soundness of the principles of my friends, on the contrary I honour those who have more firmness than myself, yet in the most quiet times my

Londonderry and H. M. Hyde, 1934, pp. 20-1.

38. Mrs Toynbee believed this to be an error for 'Woronzow' (Vorontsov), the family name of the Princess.

39. Ivan Matveevich Simolin (1720-ca 1800), Russian diplomatist; minister plenipotentiary to England 1779-85 (*Enciklopediceskij Slovar*, St Petersburg, 1900, xxix; information kindly supplied by Mr Richard Burgi). In the Parliamentary debates on the riots, 21 and 23 June 1780, the Duke of Richmond spoke against the Russian's release. See Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 732, 734-5, 746-54; *Last Journals* ii. 321.

40. John Ashburnham (1724-1812), 2d E. of Ashburnham, 1737; courtier.

41. So-called by HW because of her championship of Catherine's cause in 1762. For her services the Empress bestowed on her the Order of St Catherine and gifts of money and property (*The Russian Journals of Martha and Catherine Wilmot*, loc. cit.).

42. An allusion to Catherine's supposed

part in the murder of Peter III and of Ivan VI.

43. Three are named in *London Chronicle* 1-3 June (xlvi. 534), with the crimes of which they were convicted: 'James Earley, for feloniously assaulting Joseph White in a field near Stepney, and robbing him of one guinea, 7s. and some halfpence; John Carr, for feloniously assaulting George Worthey, Jacob Lawrence, and Esther Hart, on the highway near Hayes, and robbing them of some money, etc.; John Sparrow, for feloniously assaulting John Turner Harris on the highway on Constitution Hill, in the Green Park, and robbing him of a silver watch and 3s.' Three others convicted of similar crimes 'were respited during his Majesty's pleasure.'

44. The speech in which Mansfield used this expression is cited *ante* 18 July 1778, n. 10.

45. *Ante* 28 May 1780 (postscript of 2 June).

opinion was exactly what it is now: many years ago I shocked Mrs Macauley<sup>46</sup> by telling her, that had I been Luther and could have foreseen the woes I should occasion, I should have asked myself, whether I was authorized to cause the deaths of three or four hundred thousand persons that future millions might be advantaged. The Spartan matron despised my scruples.

Well! confusion is trumps! one only thing I anxiously beg, do not think ill of your friends; I don't mean myself, I am of no consequence, but be assured that you will love even<sup>47</sup> Lord Rockingham when I can tell you something that I cannot write.<sup>48</sup> If I live to see you again, —but ifs are the subterfuges of those that cannot support present unhappiness; whoever can descry connection between *this* instant and anything that is to come is the *maximus* of all Apollos. Adieu.

Saturday morning.

I have this moment received two letters from town to tell me that Lord George Gordon was overtaken in his flight to Scotland, and was just brought prisoner to the Horse Guards. This is all I know yet, except that some say he was seized in the park, and was not fled,<sup>49</sup>

Wait for the echo.

## TO MASON, Thursday 29 June 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 109–14. HW began this letter as least as early as 23 June; see the seventh paragraph.

June 29, 1780.

SINCE the great combustion I have not known what to write, nor did Mr Stonhewer know where you are. I shall prepare this against he sends me word whither to direct it, as he has promised. My opinion of the causes of the late tumults is a very vague one, nor shall I decide till I learn more. Whatever Lord G. Gordon meant, anti-

46. The conversation took place ca 1772, as appears in HW to Lady Ossory 10 Sept. 1792.

47. Mitford reads 'ever.'

48. At least not in a letter going by the post. This is probably the story told *post* 29 June 1780.

49. Lord George Gordon was arrested at his house in Welbeck Street 9 June 1780. De Castro, p. 180, prints the account of his arrest from the *Public Advertiser*.

Catholicism seems not only to have had little, but even only a momentary hand in the riots. Some Americans, perhaps taught by the lessons we had given them of burning towns, joined in the opportunity; a thousand discontents added others and all the indigent villains in London seized the opportunity and improved it, not to mention how many concurred from wanton folly without design. The Court at first had a mind to bestow a plot on France, Spain and the Americans, but now seem to abandon that plan.<sup>1</sup> France, solicited by American agents, might as she used to do when teased by the Jacobites, contribute a little money, a few arms and some rogues, of whom she was willing to disburthen herself, but I do not imagine it was a branch of her political schemes to burn London. She would have had some force ready to pour in and distract us in some other quarter, while the army should be all drawn to the capital.

I am much more inclined to suppose that a Court plot was engrafted early on the prospect of tumults, nay negative *plots*. I do not believe they intended to have Lord Stormont mobbed,<sup>2</sup> Lord Sandwich almost murdered,<sup>3</sup> nor Lord Mansfield's house destroyed, but Sir Geo. Saville, the D. of Richmond, and Burke,<sup>4</sup> were more devoted<sup>5</sup> by the zealot part of the mob than any of the cabinet; so few or such no precautions were taken after such provoking notice had been given by Lord George Gordon, that it is not very injurious to conclude that a necessity for calling the army together to suppress an insurrection was no very disagreeable opportunity.

It has certainly answered so roundly that I do believe the machinist<sup>6</sup> would forgive the imputation, in consideration of the honour it would do to his policy;<sup>7</sup> even Lord Mansfield has risen like a phoenix from the flames, and vomits martial law,<sup>8</sup> as if all law books were

1. De Castro, pp. 216–36, quotes reports and documents that show that the rumours of a plot fostered by the French, the Americans (Dr Franklin in particular), or the Opposition, were at the time widely believed.

2. On 2 June. He was rescued by John Drummond (De Castro, p. 36).

3. Sandwich's coach was stopped by the mob on 6 June. Sir Samuel Romilly wrote of the incident: 'I expected . . . to have seen him torn in pieces; but, leaping quickly out of the chariot, he saved himself in a coffee-house, and a very strong

party of guards immediately rode up and kept off the mob' (*Memoirs of the Life of Sir Samuel Romilly*, 2d edn, 1840, i. 123).

4. Prominent advocates of toleration for Catholics.

5. 'To destruction' is perhaps omitted: HW used the phrase in his letter to Cole 15 June 1780, COLE ii. 225.

6. The King.

7. Political sagacity, statecraft (OED).

8. In the House of Lords 19 June 1780 Lord Mansfield explained the legal justification of the King's giving discretionary powers to the military in the suppression

burnt as well as his own;<sup>9</sup> nay, like *his* plate almost all party is melted into a mass of bullion loyalty.<sup>10</sup>

This was a moment I have long dreaded! I had no doubt but the Court wished insurrections. It was strong enough *at home* to suppress them, and the suppression would unite *all* the military and militia, and all under one standard, and so I am persuaded it has already.

To complete our destruction there is an universal *anarchy of opinion*; no three men agree on any three propositions. Lord Shelburne and Lord Rockingham are bitter enemies. Burke, who has declared himself educated by an anabaptist, is made for toleration.<sup>12</sup> The Duke of Richmond and Charles Fox agree with him on that point,<sup>13</sup> while the Duke is as violent for annual Parliaments<sup>14</sup> as the Rockinghams against them. Lord Shelburne, Lord Camden, and the Duke of Grafton are as strongly anti-papistic.<sup>15</sup> The Court indeed is as full of dissension; but if interest divides men it re-unites them too, which is not the case of opinions; and such a multitude of them has been indiscreetly broached by Opposition itself, that while the Court keeps steady to two points only, prerogative and the subjugation of America, it may perhaps succeed, at least in the first, before Opposition will agree on a single one. The Court would carry the other also I think if it had the sense to temporize and consent to a tolerable pacification, but having had originally no fund of genuine

of the riots (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 694-8; De Castro, pp. 204-8).

9. In the destruction of his house (*ante* 9 June 1780). 'I have not consulted books;—indeed, I have no books to consult!' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 694).

10. '19th. The Parliament met; much loyalty in both Houses' (*Last Journals* ii. 320). As the rest of this letter shows, the expressions of loyalty did not mean unanimity of opinion.

12. That is, his tolerance embraced both dissenters and Catholics (see *ante* 21 Oct. 1779, n. 5). Speaking 20 June in the House on behalf of toleration, Burke said that he 'had been educated as a Protestant of the Church of England by a dissenter; he read the Bible there morning, noon, and night, and was the happier and better man for such reading' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 710). His teacher was a Quaker, Abraham Shackleton (1697-1771), who conducted a boarding school at Ballytore, co.

Kildare, 1726-56, which Burke attended 1741-3.

13. On 12 June 1780 Richmond wrote to Rockingham concerning the proposed repeal of the relief act for Catholics: 'My mind is made up never to consent to that measure' (George Thomas, Earl of Albemarle, *Memoirs of the Marquis of Rockingham and His Contemporaries*, 1852, ii. 419). Fox also declared against the repeal of the act in a speech 20 June 1780 (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 706).

14. '3rd [June]. The Duke of Richmond moved his bill for annual Parliaments, but it being rejected and little supported even by his own party, he was disgusted, and declared he would go into the country, as he did the next day' (*Last Journals* ii. 307). See Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 686-8.

15. On 23 June 1780 Grafton proposed to the House of Lords that the Catholic relief act be modified (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 754).

wisdom, and having squandered foolishly and anticipated all its resources, it will as usual mistake prosperity for means and blunder away its opportunities under the notion of firmness. France and ten thousand other concurrent impediments will lie still in the way, so that the whole of my reasoning centres in this, that we are in every light undone; that anarchy will reign for some time, and despotism succeed when we are as much ruined by labouring towards it, as we should have been in a few years if it had taken place when first projected.

This is the sketch of my present thoughts—whether consistent with other letters that I have written to you lately, I cannot remember. I generally judge from the complexion of circumstances, nor do I know a better guide in times when a nation is at its dregs, and the men that do think and act from principle are not only few, but distracted by subdivisions of sentiments, and have no one general system in common; my idea was to adhere to the precise line of the constitution, as a standard of union, and to endeavour to restore it, but that moment is gone, or never was arrived; I see nothing now before me on which to count except the folly that governs, and which may throw away the advantages it has recovered. That is our sole chance—and I have no head for calculating chances—still less for computing what good may arise out of folly, mischief and wickedness.

There has been more than one negotiation for partial changes, and on very different foundations. Lord Rockingham at the very moment that the public thought him more than leaning towards the ministers,<sup>16</sup> took the opportunity of reading a very explicit lecture against them in the closet.<sup>17</sup> At this instant (June 23rd) I think it much more likely that the Parliament will be soon dissolved,<sup>18</sup> trusting to the terror spread by the late tumults that none but good

16. A cryptic allusion to 'advances [towards a coalition] made by the Opposition' appears in a letter from Charles Jenkinson to the King 17 June 1780 (*Corr. Geo. III* v. 87). In July, when Rockingham's terms became generally known, HW no longer tried to defend him. See *Last Journals* ii. 324-5; Lord Fitzmaurice, *Life of William, Earl of Shelburne*, 1912, ii. 62.

17. 'The King . . . complained of Lord Rockingham, who, he said, had asked an audience, as his Majesty expected, to thank him for granting him a guard

during the riots, but had taken that opportunity to lecture him' (*Last Journals* ii. 313-4). Mrs Toynbee (xi. 234) identifies this incident with Rockingham's attack, described by Wraxall (*Historical Memoirs*, 1836, i. 354), on the ministers during the meeting of the privy council 7 June 1780. Perhaps this is the incident that HW was afraid to commit to the post (*ante* 9 June 1780).

18. Parliament was prorogued 8 July and dissolved 1 Sept. 1780 (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 767).

Catholics<sup>19</sup> will be returned. The army no doubt will be retained at the headquarters,<sup>20</sup> unless France should call it off, which does not seem probable. Lord Mansfield will have courage to coin what law he pleases while the House of Lords is guarded by dragoons; and the Chancellor,<sup>21</sup> whom all sides blindly concur in crying up to the skies,<sup>22</sup> has spirit enough of his own to execute any enterprise to which he shall be commanded; and is as ready as Maupeou<sup>23</sup> to annihilate parliaments, if timidity and cunning did not prefer *voting* despotism to laying aside votes.

I could expatiate on many particulars of this letter if we were together. More I shall not know beyond the information of the newspapers, for I shall scarce look at London this summer, one sees there nothing but the royal wish realized, red and blue coats, whoever makes his court makes a campaign. I was not born to be a courtier or a soldier. There is no hope left for an Englishman! one can expect but to be laid prostrate by France or to be enslaved at home; perhaps both, though France does not seem to see all her advantages. We have contributed nine parts in ten to our own ruin; like us she set out with vapouring and has performed as little. How despicable must both England and France appear to those active monopolizers of usurpation, the sovereigns of Prussia, Russia, and Germany. Spain is still more contemptible, who enters into a quarrel against its will,<sup>24</sup> and is content with beating its head against the rocks of Gibraltar;<sup>25</sup> but France at least has a harvest to come; she cannot have forgotten the treaties of Utrecht and Paris, and never wants a Lord Bolingbroke or a Lord Bute to negotiate for our shame, when she is tired of war. Lord Mansfield no doubt hopes to live to that dear hour and see Lord Stormont return to Paris to sign our last cession of empire.

19. I.e., supporters of the Court.

20. London.

21. Thurlow.

22. The Duke of Richmond, for example, 'paid the Lord Chancellor the highest compliments, saying, that though he had no particular connection with him, no man revered him more. . . . He admired his great and extraordinary talents, and his noble and manly mind. It was in his power, and his power only, to save this country' (*London Chronicle* 22-4 June 1780, xlvi. 601).

23. René-Nicolas-Charles-Augustin de

Maupeou (1714-92), chancellor of France 1768-92.

24. Spain had no sympathy for the republican cause and had as its prime objects the regaining of Gibraltar and Minorca. See Samuel F. Bemis, *The Hussey-Cumberland Mission and American Independence*, Princeton, 1931.

25. Gibraltar had been blockaded by the Spanish fleet since 21 June 1779, though Admiral Rodney broke the blockade and relieved the garrison in January-February 1780.

June 29, 1780.

I send this letter to town by a servant, and shall beg Mr Stonhewer to convey it to you by the coach or wagon. I have not heard a syllable of news this week, events must seek me, for I shall not inquire after them, and what signifies writing conjectures or reflections?

From MASON, Wednesday 12 July 1780

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WORKSOP 14 JY.

Aston, July 12th, 1780.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE been a tour into the north<sup>1</sup> (for you know I am in the west<sup>2</sup>) any time these six weeks, and though your letters were duly forwarded to me, I postponed answering them as I could only send you back reflections on the shocking scenes you were witness to, which you must have made better on the spot. Amongst all my acquaintance I know not above two besides yourself who agreed with me from the first, of the impropriety of introducing that bill which was the cause of the tumult,<sup>3</sup> and I trust that nothing which has been said either by my Lord Chancellor or the Right Reverend bench<sup>4</sup> has led us to change our opinion. I shall as soon believe with Sir Thomas Mills<sup>5</sup> that Mr Maskall<sup>6</sup> whom I never saw was a rioter and

1. 'I am returned from my northern tour, the last week of which was spent at Hornby Castle [Lady Holderness's seat], and a more tedious week I think I never spent' (Mason to Lord Harcourt 12 July 1780, *Harcourt Papers* vii. 68).

2. I.e. at Aston, in the West Riding.

3. Savile's bill to remove certain civil disabilities from Catholics (1778). HW and Mason condemned the bill in their letters of 15 and 24 May 1778.

4. In discussing on 3 July a bill to prohibit Roman Catholics from being the teachers of Protestant children, Thurlow proposed as an amendment 'that Roman Catholics be permitted to teach anything, in any manner they think proper, only that they be not suffered to keep boarding-

schools, or any such seminary as may give them the exclusive government of the children under their direction' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 761-2). The bishops had disappointed Mason on 23 June by doing nothing about repealing the act of 1778 (*ibid.* xxi. 757).

5. Sir Thomas Mills (d. 1793), Kt, 1772 (William A. Shaw, *The Knights of England*, 1906, ii. 293; *European Magazine*, 1793, xxiii. 240), described by HW as 'a noisy fellow, who lived at a vast expense without any visible means . . . supposed to be a natural son of Lord Mansfield, and to be supported by him in that profusion' (Mason's *Satirical Poems* 117).

6. Henry John Maskall (or Mascal), an apothecary, was tried 3 July for participa-



that I could swear to him as such, as that in these times such a bill was expedient.

However, it has given government a fair handle to proceed by and the speech I have just read shows me they will proceed by it.<sup>7</sup> I cannot take the compliment you make us associators, of the Duke of R[ichmond]'s being our coadjutor, so cordially as you may expect I should. It is certain when the committee deputies met<sup>8</sup> that persons sent by him occasioned an alteration in the form of our Association which many of us think is for the worse, and yet after that he in less than two months' time brings a bill into the House which goes further than the warmest of us would ever have attempted to have gone.<sup>9</sup> But in short, I see so much inconclusiveness on all sides that I find myself obliged to abide by my own opinions merely because they have been my old opinions, and I act no other part under the ministration of Lord North than I should have done, had an opportunity offered, under that of the Duke of Newcastle, and should do again were there to be an administration under my Lord Rockingham.<sup>10</sup>

How far am I to congratulate on the royal fraternal reconciliation?<sup>11</sup> I fancy not much, if a Court bird (a little lame or so)<sup>12</sup> which

tion in the burning of Lord Mansfield's house during the riots. Sir Thomas Mills testified against Maskall, but could not 'in his conscience say he heard the prisoner say anything, saw him do anything, or have anything in his hand.' Maskall was acquitted (*London Chronicle* 1-4 July 1780, xlvi. 4-5).

7. Mason's letter to Harcourt on this day shows that he means the King's speech at the close of Parliament 8 July 1780 (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 68). Because of his recent labours for Parliamentary reform Mason was doubtless sensitive to the King's warning of 'the hazard of innovation' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 767).

8. On 27 March, to devise a form of association for Yorkshire (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 143).

9. 'It is certain that he [Richmond] sent persons among the deputies to vote against the resolution about annual Parliaments, and, to conciliate them, that resolution was couched in these terms, *not exceeding three years*. How is this conduct to be

reconciled with his bringing a bill into the House, two months after, that went a much greater length than we ever aimed at?' (Mason to Harcourt 12 July 1780, *Harcourt Papers* vii. 68-9). Richmond's bill, introduced 3 June 1780, urged not only annual Parliaments, but also universal suffrage. See *ante* 4 June 1780 and n. 17.

10. An allusion to the negotiations between Rockingham and the Court. See *ante* 29 June 1780, n. 16.

11. On 10 June 1780 the Duke of Gloucester wrote to the King to offer his services in the suppression of the Gordon riots. The King seemed desirous of a reconciliation, but showed an unwillingness to receive the Duchess, and the Duke refused to attend a public levee without her. The Duke of Cumberland, who was also out of favour because of his misalliance, at the first hint of a reconciliation between his brother and the King asked permission to come to Court, and showed himself willing to overlook slights to his Duchess (*Last Journals* ii. 313-9).

I have lately heard, sings a true song. Tell me, however, and I'll prepare my *Congratulatio Astonica*.

I sincerely hope you will continue your most agreeable historico-politico-literario gazettes; they make my principal entertainment at this distance from town, and if I do not thank you for them so frequently as I ought, blame me not on that <sc>re—a man that has nothing but halfpence to pay with, must tire a person that waits till he changes a guinea. Believe me at all times, even times worse than the present,

Your most obliged and faithful humble servant,

W. MASON

To MASON, Saturday 15 July 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 116–9.

Strawberry Hill, July 15, 1780.

AS my gazettes owed their whole fund of merit to my being in London and to your being in the north-west, with the sole though uncommon appendix of my telling you nothing but what I believe true or telling you anything more but as report, I don't know whether I do not comply too literally with your request if I write when I can send you neither a political nor a literary gazette. I scarce ever look at London—*quid Romæ faciam?*<sup>1</sup> I am in utter ignorance, nay, I am sure there is nothing new, for Cambridge was here this morning and had nothing in his budget of more importance than the Duke of Montagu's<sup>2</sup> being set out for Scotland,<sup>3</sup> which you may repay by informing me when Lady Conyers's wet-nurse arrives.<sup>4</sup> The notion is that Lord George Gordon is not to be tried;<sup>5</sup> Mr C. said, if not he

12. Not identified.

1. 'What is there for me to do at Rome?' (Juvenal, *Satires* iii. 41).

2. George Brudenell (after 1749, Montagu) (1712–90), 4th E. of Cardigan, 1732; cr. (1766) D. of Montagu; K.G., 1752; P.C., 1776; governor to the Prince of Wales and Prince Frederick, 1776–80. HW described him as 'one of the weakest and most ignorant men living' (*Last Journals* i. 558).

3. 'Yesterday morning the Duke of Montagu set out from his house in Privy Garden for Scotland' (*Public Advertiser* 15 July 1780).

4. 'Lady Holderness told me on Tuesday that her daughter Lady Conyers was brought to bed in Yorkshire at seven months of a dead child' (Lady Mary Coke, *MS Journal* 28 Sept. 1780).

5. 'Administration are said to be not a little puzzled how to act against Lord

guessed why; I had not the curiosity to ask him what he guessed. I have buried my curiosity; what can happen that is worth learning!

You ask me if you shall send me a *Congratulatio Astonica*—no: not unless it can be preceded identically in every particular like its predecessors by a *luctus*.<sup>6</sup> Your lame bird chirped truly: of which hereafter.

My court is busily occupied by a great wedding; the Duchess's second infanta, Donna Maria, is going to be married to the Conde di Egremont.<sup>7</sup> It's he is grandson of Sir William Windham,<sup>8</sup> and descended from proud dull old Somerset.<sup>9</sup> I flatter myself their children will be dashed with loyalty, pride, and stupidity enough (in spite of Lady Maria's wit, and drops of Sir Robert's blood) to fit them for being grandes of the first class in the rising monarchy. Don't you believe that the Bavarian nobles were very vain of their *Elector* becoming the *Emperor* Charles VII, though it cost him his dominions?<sup>10</sup> These hymeneals will prevent my going to Malvern, to which I had no great fancy, especially as I am in much better health than I was last summer.

I have no more paragraphs for you but a history that is both literary and political—no, not that, but exactly of the gender of our late politics; in short riotic. You must know an embankment is making at Richmond for drawing barges, for the benefit of the city's trade.<sup>11</sup> It encroaches on the garden of Colman,<sup>12</sup> manager of the

George Gordon . . . and 'tis said they will not be able to maintain in any way their charge of *high treason* against him' (*London Courant* 15 July 1780). The rumour reported by HW was without foundation. Lord George, however, was not tried until Feb. 1781 (*post* 5 Feb. 1781), when he was acquitted.

6. As an elegy for the deceased king would precede the formal tributes to his successor.

7. George O'Brien Wyndham (1751–1837), 3d E. of Egremont.

8. Sir William Wyndham (1687–1740), 3d Bt, 1695; supporter of Bolingbroke and opponent of Sir Robert Walpole.

9. Charles Seymour (1662–1748), 6th D. of Somerset, known as 'the proud Duke.' See Collins, *Peerage*, 1812, i. 184. Lady Catherine Seymour (d. 1731), the Duke's

second daughter, married (1708), Sir William Wyndham.

10. Charles Albert (1697–1745), Elector of Bavaria, 1726; Holy Roman Emperor, as Charles VII, 1742. He was elected by the enemies of Maria Theresa, but was not able to oppose the Austrians in his own hereditary dominions.

11. Residents of both sides of the river had been quarrelling for some years over where the tow-path was to be built. The Twickenham forces, at least in the area where Colman and Cambridge lived, won (act of 17 George III, c. 18), and the path for that stretch of the river was put on the Richmond side.

12. Colman's villa at Richmond, built by him in 1766, was near the new Richmond Bridge. It is described by his son, George Colman the younger, in Richard

little theatre in the Haymarket.<sup>13</sup> He cut away the piles; the city went to law with him and the town of Richmond, and cast them,<sup>13a</sup> and renewed the invasion. On Monday evening Colman hired an *Association*, who stormed and levelled the new works, and knocked down two persons who opposed them, and half-killed one.<sup>14</sup> A committee of the city arrived on Thursday in their barge, and (I suppose by authority of Lord Amherst countersigned by Lord Bathurst<sup>15</sup>) seized twenty of the rioters and now hold them imprisoned on board their floating King's Bench,<sup>16</sup> under a guard of the military, who are applied to all sauces.<sup>16a</sup> In a new farce of Colman, called *The Manager in Distress*,<sup>17</sup> I found t'other day the portrait of Cambridge in the character of a newsmonger, *who lives about twelve miles from town*.<sup>18</sup> I wondered this was so specifically marked, but he dropped this morning that he had staved off the nuisance of the embankment on his side of the river (for he lives directly opposite to Colman) by a clause in the act of Parliament,<sup>19</sup> and that offence I suppose dragged

Brinsley Peake, *Memoirs of the Colman Family*, 1841, i. 303-6.

13. Colman acquired the Haymarket Theatre from Foote in 1776. The details of the transaction are given by E. R. Page, *George Colman the Elder*, New York, 1935, pp. 240-4.

13a. I.e., defeated them in the lawsuit (OED *sub* 'cast' v., 14).

14. Colman is not named in the newspaper accounts of the fight, but is presumably 'a person at Richmond' who, according to the version published in the *London Courant* 21 July 1780, 'determined to oppose the work; and one day last week a posse of coalheavers, watermen, etc., armed with axes and saws, made an attack upon the labourers employed in the prosecution of this improvement; the assailants were at the first onset repulsed, but they fetched a reinforcement to re-commence the attack, and ensured a victory, and the city's men were drove back to the navigation barge, several much hurt, and one person dangerously wounded.'

15. Lord Amherst was in command of the military forces used in quelling the Gordon riots. Bathurst was president of the Council and thus played a prominent part in the decision to allow the military to act at their own discretion (*ante* 9 June 1780).

16. 'City marshals were sent to Richmond for the apprehension of the delinquents. . . . Many of them were secured, and a file of soldiers guarded them in the navigation barge to the rotation-office in the Borough [Southwark], on Friday last, where their employer appeared' (*London Courant*, loc. cit.). The prisoners were released on bail (HW to Lady Ossory 18 July 1780).

16a. Mr Ketton-Cremer suggests 'sores.'

17. First acted at the Haymarket 30 May 1780 (Genest vi. 155-6), and published 5 or 6 July 1780 (*Public Advertiser* 1 and 6 July 1780). HW's copy is now WSL.

18. 'His head is in a constant whirl of ideas, and his person in perpetual motion. . . . He lives about a dozen miles out of town, but dotes upon London; comes up on a hard trot every day after breakfast, stops every friend he meets to receive and communicate intelligence, and inquires after news from the men at the turnpikes' (*The Manager in Distress*, 1780, p. 4). The identification of the character 'Bustleton' with Cambridge is discussed at length in Richard D. Altick, *Richard Owen Cambridge, Belated Augustan*, Philadelphia, 1941, pp. 61-4.

19. The right to build a tow-path for horses on the Surrey side of the river between Kew and Water Lane, Richmond,

him on the stage, which is a little hard, as he had the same right to feel what Colman so much resents, and he is truly, I mean Cambridge, so benevolent and inoffensive a man, that his little foible does not deserve such treatment.

When shall you go to Nuneham? I should like to meet you there. I expect Sandby every day who is to attempt Lady Di's drawings for my play in his new aquatinta.<sup>20</sup> It is a thousand pities they should exist only in one septinity<sup>21</sup> and that the world should have no idea of the powers of her genius if the originals should perish. Bartolozzi has executed very well the drawing of her two daughters,<sup>22</sup> but they have not half the ingredients, passions, graces, horrors, scenes, expressions of my seven pictures. I am writing in their own closet,<sup>23</sup> and it is having the continence of Scipio to say no more about them though you know them so well; but how infinitely pleasanter if you was sitting here and talking them over! what shackled conversations are letters when one gasps for effusion! you can rhyme your sensations and stamp them immortal, and gulp them, and they half choke me; pray breathe for me, and send me something to help me—as the apothecaries say—expectorate.<sup>24</sup>

was published in paragraph 25 of the act of 17 George III, c. 18. Cambridge's part in the introduction of this clause remains obscure, but his active interest in the controversy over the tow-path is shown by his letter to the Earl of Buckinghamshire 3 Dec. 1778 (Hist. MSS Comm., Lothian MSS, 1905, pp. 341–2).

20. A method of engraving sepia or India ink drawings, developed in 1775 by Paul Sandby. The technique is described in William Sandby, *Thomas and Paul Sandby, Royal Academicians*, 1892, pp. 135–42. Sandby had not arrived by 24 Aug. (post 24 Aug. 1780), and he apparently did not make the engravings.

21. That is, there were only the seven original drawings for *The Mysterious Mother*. For an account of the drawings see ante 18 Feb. 1776.

22. Mary Beauclerk (1766–1851), m. (as his 2d wife, ca 1795) Graf Franz von Jenison zu Walworth (Mrs Stuart Erskine, *Lady Diana Beauclerk*, 1793, pp. 206, 230, 269; *Genealogisches Taschenbuch der deutschen*

*gräflichen Häuser*, 1844, p. 283; N&Q 1912, 11th ser., v. 389; *Journals of the House of Lords* xxxii. 110–1); and Elizabeth Beauclerk (ca 1767–93), m. (1787) George Augustus Herbert, 11th E. of Pembroke and Montgomery, 1794 (Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *The History of Modern Wiltshire*, 1822–44, ii. 121; Nevile R. Wilkinson, *Wilton House Pictures*, 1907, i. 18–19). 'Bartolozzi's print of her two daughters . . . is another specimen of her singular genius and taste. The gay and sportive innocence of the younger daughter, and the demure application of the elder, are as characteristically contrasted as Milton's *Allegro* and *Penseroso*' (HW's Advertisement to the fourth volume of the *Anecdotes*, 1780, p. ix). A reproduction of the engraving (for which see *BM Cat. of Engraved British Portraits* iii. 443) is in Mrs Stuart Erskine, op. cit. 203.

23. That is, the Beauclerk Closet.

24. 'To ease or relieve one's mind' (OED sub 'expectorate' 3b, which cites HW to Bentley 13 Dec. 1754).

## TO MASON, Tuesday 8 August 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 119-21.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 8, 1780.

YOU have perhaps heard or at least seen in the papers enough of the story of my niece Lady Maria and Lord Egremont, not to be surprised at my late silence. The treaty occupied me for some time, and the rupture since.<sup>1</sup> Do not be alarmed; I am not going to suffocate you with the detail, I will only say that she has behaved with a good sense, spirit and gentleness, that, except the first, surprised me, and she blended the two last with such charming propriety, that nothing but perfection in the first could have united them so gracefully. Her lover is a pitiful object on whom her merit would have been deplorably thrown away.

You lost nothing by my silence. Though I write now, I have nothing to tell you. The Parliament was, I believe, to have been dissolved tomorrow,<sup>2</sup> if it is not, I suppose it is from no renewal of love between dear friends; but proceeds either from the sailing of the Spanish fleet<sup>3</sup> or from fear of bad news from the West Indies,<sup>4</sup> which might squeeze a little lemon into the elections. A leaf of laurel no bigger than one shred of a daisy would give wings to the proclamation<sup>5</sup> that lies ready to fly.

I know no more literary than political news, in short I know nothing. Tomorrow I go to Park Place,<sup>6</sup> and did intend to extend my progress to Nuneham, but Lady Jersey,<sup>7</sup> who is at Richmond with Lady

1. The breaking off of the match was reported in the *Public Advertiser* 25 and 27 July 1780. HW later wrote, 'Lady Melbourne . . . being the mistress of Lord Egremont, had occasioned his breaking off his match with Lady Maria, the Duchess's daughter, the last year. . . . Her friend was the reigning beauty, the Duchess of Devonshire, who had assisted in breaking off the above-named match, and had particularly thereby offended the Duchess of Gloucester' (*Last Journals* ii. 351). For further details see the following letter and HW to Lady Ossory 18 July and to Mann 24 July 1780.

2. It was dissolved 1 Sept. See *post* 31 Aug. 1780.

3. 'Cadiz, July 9. This morning sailed from this port the combined fleet, under the command of Don Lewis de Cordova, director-general of the fleet, composed of 22 sail of Spanish, and nine French' (*Public Advertiser* 7 Aug. 1780).

4. News of the arrival in the West Indies of a Spanish fleet to join the French fleet already there 'occasioned an alarm for the safety of the British West India islands' (*ibid.*).

5. I.e., the King's proclamation dissolving Parliament.

6. Henry Seymour Conway's seat.

7. Frances Twysden (1753-1821), m. (1770) George Bussy Villiers (1735-1805),

Di Beauclerk<sup>8</sup> and drank tea here yesterday evening, told me the Harcourts are to pay their annual visit to Lord Vernon<sup>9</sup> on Thursday. Pray tell me when you are to be at Nuneham, I should like to meet you there. Lady Jersey says the plan of alteration of the house is laid aside;<sup>10</sup> and all I could understand was, that the approach to the house is to be changed; but she is too fine a lady to explain how that will produce their being better lodged.

You are desired to conclude that I could fill the rest of this page with a collection of phrases, that while they complained of want of matter would display great ingenuity in spinning a full letter out of inanity, or if you will not be so complaisant, I do not much care. The naked truth is that I have not a word more to say. If you think I might as well not have written, I think so too: but at least it proves that I thought on you: and it proves too that in the most glorious reign in our annals, there was one moment in which one had nothing to commend.

### From MASON, Sunday 20 August 1780

Printed for the first time, from MS now in the possession of Mr Arthur A. Houghton, Jr. Offered in Thorpe's Catalogue of Manuscripts, 1834, pt iv, p. 593, lot 1139.

*Address:* The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

*Postmark:* ROTHERHAM 24 AU.

Aston, August 20th 1780.

Dear Sir,

**I** WAS on a visit to Lord Strafford when I heard the first news of what must necessarily have given you much chagrin and uneasiness, and which now that it is over, I hope (from your letter) ceases to do so, and that you feel as a man should do when some person dear to him has escaped some imminent calamity. The first ac-

4th E. of Jersey; later mistress of the Prince of Wales.

8. At about this time she removed from Twickenham to Devonshire Cottage at Richmond (Mrs Steuart Erskine, *Lady Diana Beauclerk*, 1903, p. 190).

9. George Venables-Vernon (1708-80), cr. (1762) Bn Vernon; Lady Harcourt's father. He died 21 Aug. 1780 at Sudbury, Derbyshire.

10. In July 1780 William Whitehead wrote to Lord Harcourt: 'I rejoice at your expedition in the works at Nuneham, and have no doubt of their excellence' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 346). Lady Jersey was mistaken about the halting of the work. See *post* 20 Aug. 1780.

count coming out of a corner of your quadrangle<sup>1</sup> imputed all to the ambition of the *mother*;<sup>2</sup> I use the term then used. But a second from a more impartial relater, Lady G[reenwich],<sup>3</sup> told the tale as it really was, and a shameful tale it is; such a one as, could I have a worse opinion of the present noble race than I have long had, would make me ashamed of bowing to anybody *above* a baronet. But I quit with you the pitiful subject.

I do not recollect whether I thanked you for your letter<sup>4</sup> which came in a parcel of books from Curzon Street. It arrived safe, yet I am sorry to say it has not put another noble personage<sup>5</sup> in so very patriotic a point of view as you seem to wish it should, for I know from other hands that he was duped and laughed at. A just judgment in my opinion for aiming at what he aimed, *conciliation*.<sup>6</sup> What peace, says the Scripture, when the whoredoms of thy mother Jesebell and her witchcrafts are so many?<sup>7</sup> The witchcrafts if not the mother still exist; and the person I allude to is no breaker of *spells* whatever he may think of his abilities in that way. All I know is he was laughed at and even mimicked. And so we conclude his chapter.

What think you of our late York resolutions? I trust you will not say that they are either treasonable or unconstitutional.<sup>8</sup> Sir G[eorge] S[aville]<sup>9</sup> has acceded to our plan which gives us no little comfort,

1. 'From Lady Mary Coke' (HW's note in MS). She at that time had a house in Berkeley Square (*The Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke*, ed. Lady Louisa Stuart, Edinburgh, 1889-96, i. p. cxxxv).

2. Lady Maria Waldegrave's mother, the Duchess of Gloucester. Lady Mary Coke had written to her sister Lady Strafford 24 July, 'The great marriage that was to have been tomorrow is all at an end. Lord Egremont made most noble offers, but what can satisfy insatiable interest and ambition? Four thousand pounds a year jointure, a thousand pounds a year pin money, and ten thousand pounds laid out for her jewels, the mother of Lady Maria Waldegrave said was not sufficient. She insisted upon five thousand pounds a year jointure, which behaviour irritated Lord Egremont as well it might, and he waited on Lady Maria on Friday and declared he would proceed no farther but break off the marriage. Charles Fox did all he could to alter this resolution, but in

vain, he told him he was determined. 'Tis unhappy for those girls they have such a mother' (Lady Mary Coke, MS Journal 24 July 1780).

3. Expanded in MS by HW; sister of Lady Strafford and Lady Mary Coke.

4. Apparently *ante* 29 June 1780.

5. 'Lord Rockingham' (HW's note).

6. Of the ministry.

7. 2 Kings 9. 22.

8. At the meeting of the Yorkshire Committee of Association 2-3 Aug. 1780 resolutions were passed, with reference to the Gordon riots, condemning the use of the military force outside the control of the civil authorities, and reprehending 'the extension of similar orders to the army in other parts of the kingdom.' Another resolution re-affirmed the associators' determination 'to correct the inveterate abuses in the duration of and representation in Parliament, which are the true origin and source of all our national grievances' (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 258-64).



and will make us act more compactly in case of a Parliamentary dissolution. We are not however vain enough to hope for more converts.

I fancy Lady Jersey's news is like all fine-lady news, apocryphal, for a letter which I received dated the first of this month from Lord Harcourt says nothing of his Staffordshire expedition.<sup>10</sup> As to myself I cannot conveniently move southward till late in the autumn, when if it suits you to meet me at Nuneham I shall think it very fortunate. I am just now going a little northward to pay a visit of a few days to Mr Wedell.<sup>11</sup> But a letter directed hither will be sure to follow me if not find me returned. Believe me

Most truly yours,

W. MASON

To MASON, Thursday 24 August 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 121-2.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 24, 1780.

THE glorious campaigns in the two parks<sup>1</sup> and the vengeance inflicted on a parcel of schoolboys and housemaids,<sup>2</sup> who have been executed for performing a rebellion that was suckled for a week by the whole legislature and by the magistracy of London, are a little obscured already by the entire capture of our East and West Indian fleets by the Spanish squadron,<sup>3</sup> under the nose of the senti-

9. Expanded in MS by HW. In an address to his Yorkshire constituents 5 Sept. 1780 Savile declared that he was in agreement with the recent resolutions of the committee (*ibid.* 276-86).

10. To Lord Vernon's at Sudbury, across the Dove from Staffordshire. Lord Vernon died the day after this letter was written.

11. William Weddell (ca 1724-92) of Newby Hall, near Ripon in the West Riding. There is a chapter on Newby in A. T. Bolton, *The Architecture of Robert and James Adam*, 1922, ii. 133-45, which concludes with other references to Weddell.

were encamped. The camps did not break up until 15 Aug. (*London Chronicle* 10-12 and 12-15 Aug. 1780, xlviii. 138, 152).

2. '9th [August] . . . It is worthy of remark that of the several persons, male and female, executed on account of the late riots, seventeen of them have been under 18 years of age, and three not quite 15' (newspaper cutting in *Last Journals* ii. 327). Of the 59 rioters capitally convicted, 21 were executed, the rest being pardoned (*De Castro, Gordon Riots*, p. 208).

3. 'Yesterday [22 Aug.] the lieutenant of the *Thetis* arrived at the Admiralty express, with the disagreeable intelligence that the fleets of outward-bound West India ships, which sailed from England on the 29th of July, and the outward-bound

1. St James's and Hyde, where the soldiers called out to quell the Gordon riots

mental Dr Cumberland.<sup>4</sup> I suppose he will be recalled now like the illustrious Stormont and Eden<sup>5</sup> as he has executed his mission; for we contrive to send proxies to receive affronts.<sup>6</sup> The first commissioner of the Admiralty<sup>7</sup> I suppose will go to Portsmouth to receive a box of the ear from Captains Huncuff or Crusanuff, who seem selected by Captain Thomas Mackensie,<sup>8</sup> one of the Russian commanders, to insult us by their very names.<sup>9</sup> He perhaps will be invested *here* like Lord Macleod<sup>10</sup> with *the Polish Star*.<sup>11</sup> Apropos, two companies raised

East India fleet, which sailed at the same time, under convoy . . . had fallen in with a squadron of Spanish and French men-of-war . . . on the 9th instant, a little way from the island of Madeira. . . . Fifty-two of the West India ships, and five East Indiamen, are all taken' (*London Chronicle* 22-4 Aug. 1780, xlviii. 177; see also *Sandwich Papers* iii. 277). Later reports revealed that the total number of ships lost was 63. It was an unprecedented disaster for British commerce. See Robert Beatson, *Naval and Military Memoirs of Great Britain from 1727 to 1783*, 1804, v. 148-54.

4. Richard Cumberland, the dramatist, had sailed for Spain 28 April 1780 on a peace mission. The negotiations failed. See Samuel Flagg Bemis, *The Hussey-Cumberland Mission and American Independence*, 1931. The 'Dr' is satirical, possibly to contrast Cumberland unfavourably with Dr Franklin.

5. HW alludes to Stormont's recall from Paris (*ante* 16 March 1778) and to the failure of the peace commission to America, on which Eden served (*ante* 24 July 1778). HW had recently met 'that superlative jackanapes, Mr Eden' (HW to Lady Ossory 16 Aug. 1780) and was therefore reminded of his failure.

6. HW was correct in his surmise that the victory of the Spaniards and French over the English merchant fleet would hinder the Cumberland mission. See *Sandwich Papers* iii. 277-8.

7. Lord Sandwich.

8. Thomas Mackenzie (d. 1786), midshipman in the Russian navy, 1765; Lt, 1769; Lt-Capt., 1773; Capt., 2d class, 1775, 1st class, 1777; Rear-Adm., 1783 (*Obshchii morskoi spisok*, St Petersburg, 1890, pt iv, pp. 300-1).

9. A fleet of merchant ships accompanied by Russian men-of-war sailed into the English Channel 10 Aug., prepared to uphold the Empress Catherine's policy of armed neutrality (*ante* 17 April 1780). A few days later the ships anchored off Deal (*London Chronicle* 19-22 Aug. 1780, xlviii. 170). Many in England were disposed to regard this as a hostile act, but the administration took no steps. English resentment was heightened by the fact that five of the captains were British (*ibid*). A list of Russian captains containing the three names mentioned by HW appeared in *London Chronicle* 15-17 Aug., xlviii. 154, and *London Courant* 17 Aug. 1780. The fleet sailed away 19 Aug. (*London Courant* 23 Aug. 1780).

10. John Mackenzie (1727-89), styled Lord Macleod; son of 3d E. of Cromarty. He took part in the rising of 1745, was pardoned in 1748, but was compelled to convey his property to the Crown. In 1749 he entered the service of the King of Sweden and received (by 1762) the Order of the North (or Polar) Star. He returned to England in 1777, became a colonel in the army, and in 1780 was elected M.P. for Ross-shire. The family estates were restored to him in 1784. See *Scots Peerage* iii. 82; William Fraser, *The Earls of Cromartie*, Edinburgh, 1876, i. pp. cxxxvi-cclviii.

11. I.e., Polar. In his first note on Mason's *Heroic Epistle* (*ante* May 1779), HW wrote that the Order of the Polar Star was conferred on Lord Macleod, 'who was invested with it at St James's in 1779 by his Majesty, at the request of the King of Sweden, probably requested by the King to request it' (Mason's *Satirical Poems* 53). Actually Macleod had been a Knight of the Polar Star for many years (see preceding note); on 9 Dec. 1778, however, he

by the latter laird for the East are taken,<sup>12</sup> and two ships of ordnance and seven of General Rainsford's<sup>13</sup> companies for Jamaica.<sup>14</sup>

The Parliament it is said and believed will not be dissolved.<sup>15</sup> The reason assigned is that the voters in the militia cannot be spared from the camps to choose a new standing army of Parliament-men. I hurry over politics which makes one's ink blush till it is red ink; yet I have nothing else to tell you. I go on Monday to make Mr Barrett<sup>16</sup> a visit in Kent, and shall look again at Knowle.<sup>17</sup>

As there is no likelihood of a general election, unless some miraculous victory should drop out of the clouds, I promise myself that you will think of Nuneham in September, where I will certainly meet you, if you give me notice. Sandby has not come near me,<sup>18</sup> nor does even Strawberry furnish a paragraph, yet when I see you, I shall not be so barren as I seem to be, though I have sauntered away the whole summer, but my ears have not lain fallow. Adieu.

was invested by George III, at the request of Gustavus III of Sweden, as Commander of the Swedish Order of the Sword. See Nicholas Carlisle, *A Concise Account of the Several Foreign Orders of Knighthood . . . Especially of Such as Have Been Conferred upon British Subjects*, 1839, p. 454.

12. In 1778 Macleod had raised two battalions of Highlanders, comprising the 73d regiment (later re-numbered 71st). The first battalion, under Macleod's command, embarked for India in Jan. 1779 (Richard Cannon, *Historical Record of the 71st Regiment*, 1852, pp. 3, 5). Some of the vessels captured by the Spanish may have carried replacements for Macleod, although this is not mentioned in the newspaper reports.

13. Charles Rainsford (1728–1809), Brig.-Gen., 1762, Maj.-Gen., 1777, Gen., 1795; aide-de-camp to George III, 1777; equerry to the Duke of Gloucester, 1780.

14. On 2 June 1780 Rainsford had been gazetted colonel of the 99th regiment of foot, raised in 1779 for service in Jamaica (*Army List* for 1780, p. 176; H. M. Chichester and George Burges-Short, *The Records and Badges of Every Regiment and Corps in the British Army*, 2d edn, [?1899],

p. 683). In *Last Journals* ii. 327–8 HW repeats this statement about Rainsford's companies. His source has not been found nor has the story been confirmed, but *Public Advertiser* 23 Aug. printed a report that the West Indianmen taken carried '1200 soldiers on board for the West Indies,' and *London Chronicle* 22–4 Aug. (xlviii. 178) reported that 'twenty-two of the West India ships were going to Jamaica.'

15. 'It is said that it is at last finally determined upon in the cabinet, not to dissolve Parliament till their next meeting about the Christmas recess' (*London Courant* 23 Aug. 1780). The rumour proved to be without foundation. See *post* 31 Aug. 1780.

16. Thomas Barrett (1744–1803) of Lee, near Canterbury; HW's friend and correspondent. See *GM* 1803, lxxiii pt i. 90–1; *The Autobiography, Times, Opinions, and Contemporaries of Sir Egerton Brydges*, 1834, ii. 86–9; *ante* 27 March 1773, n. 27.

17. Knole Park, near Sevenoaks, the seat of the Duke of Dorset. For an account of an earlier visit see HW to Bentley 5 Aug. 1752.

18. See *ante* 15 July 1780, when HW was expecting him.

## TO MASON, Thursday 31 August 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 122-3.

Berkeley Square, Aug. 31, 1780.

**I** HATE to send false news, though about insignificant subjects as the choice of churchwardens or members of Parliament, and therefore I write a line to tell you the latter is to be dissolved tomorrow.<sup>1</sup>

I returned from Mr Barrett's last night, which is a prettier place than he had modestly represented.<sup>2</sup> It is like himself quiet. There is a small house that is decent, a cheerful vale, an humble stream improved, a few trees of dignity, and ground irregular enough for variety. He has some few good pictures, prints, and books, and indulges himself without extravagance. I saw some other places that I liked less,<sup>3</sup> and revisited Knowle on my return,<sup>4</sup> which disappointed my memory much; but unless you know how vast and venerable I thought I remembered it, I cannot give you the measure of my surprise; but then there was a trapes of a housekeeper, who I suppose was the Baccelli's<sup>5</sup> dresser, and who put me out of humour, and so good night.

1. The King's proclamation dissolving Parliament was published 1 Sept. 1780.

2. For an account of HW's visit see *Country Seats* 76-7.

3. Deane, near Wingham, the abandoned seat of Sir Henry Oxenden, described by HW as 'trist and ill-furnished' (*ibid.* 77); and St Alban's Court, Nonington, near Dover, the seat of William Hammond (*ibid.*).

4. See also HW to Lady Ossory 1 Sept. 1780.

5. Gianetta (or Giovanna) Bacelli (d. 1801), dancer; the Duke of Dorset's mistress,

whom he had brought from Paris and established at Knole, where she had a tower to herself and a large staff of servants. Her portrait, commissioned by the Duke, was painted by Reynolds in 1782-3 (Algernon Graves and W. V. Cronin, *History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1899-1901, i. 41). She was also painted by Gainsborough, and sculptured in the nude by an unidentified artist. See HW to Conway 16 June 1779 and to Hannah More 4 July 1788; V. Sackville-West, *Knole and the Sackvilles*, 1923, pp. 188-92.

## From MASON, Wednesday 20 September 1780

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WORKSOP 23 SE. FREE.

Aston, Sept. 20th, 1780.

AFTER a most bustling and uncomfortable fortnight at York, etc.,<sup>1</sup> I am returned hither for a week's quiet. I hope our Association will obtain some little grace and favour in your eyes, both for what it has done and for what it has not done. It has plucked every peacock's feather out of the tail of that strutting carrion crow L[ascelles],<sup>2</sup> and has not sullied the immaculate white plumage of the uncle of the house of Cavendish.<sup>3</sup> Are you satisfied? I am sure Lord R[ockingham]<sup>4</sup> ought to be so, for we have done for him what he would never have dared to do for himself, could he have enjoyed that plenitude of ministerial power which your father and Mr Pelham<sup>5</sup> after him ever enjoyed. An opposition in the county of York would never have been ventured upon. And yet we have proved its practicability, and have by a most moderate subscription (not above £14,000)<sup>6</sup> frightened the Lord Paramount of the West India Islands<sup>7</sup> out of the contest. Nothing was ever a more complete victory and nothing ever more easily obtained.

But while I am boasting in this manner do not think that from this event I augur any substantial good to this miserable country.

1. Where Mason had been engaged in electioneering activities.

2. Expanded in MS by HW. Edwin Lascelles (1713-95), cr. (1790) Bn of Harewood; M. P. Scarborough 1744-54, Northallerton 1754-61 and 1780-90, Yorkshire 1761-80; incurred Mason's displeasure by not joining the Yorkshire Association (Arthur Gooder, *The Parliamentary Representation of the County of York*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society xci and xcvi, 1935-8, ii. 149). The Association successfully opposed his intention of standing for re-election for the county, but he was returned to Parliament in the by election for Northallerton (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 271, and Gooder, loc. cit.). 'Mason is at the height of all human felicity in having drove Mr Lascelles out of his seat for

Yorkshire' (Frederick Montagu to Mrs Delany 10 Oct. 1780, *Delany Correspondence* v. 565).

3. 'Lord J. Cavendish' (HW's interlinear note). Lord John was the uncle of the 5th Duke of Devonshire. Although not in sympathy with the Association, Cavendish retained his seat for York.

4. Expanded by HW.

5. Hon. Henry Pelham (1696-1754), first lord of the Treasury 1743-54.

6. A subscription to oppose Lascelles was voted at the county meeting 14 Sept. 1780 (*London Courant* 22 Sept. 1780).

7. Lascelles left an estate which included an income of £25,000 a year from West Indian holdings (*The Farington Diary*, ed. James Greig, 1922-8, i. 100-1).

If elections in general go as ill in the other counties as they have done in Yorkshire, the next Parliament will be, if possible, worse than the last. *Parlons d'autres choses.*

I find here a letter from my friend Mr Gilpin<sup>8</sup> (whose drawings you once saw in my hands and admired). Some years ago he published a pretty little book which he called *An Essay on Prints*,<sup>9</sup> and which has passed through two editions and is now in the press for a third.<sup>10</sup> He tells me, 'he has an inclination to *inscribe* it to you, if I think it will be well taken and not considered in any little low pecuniary view,' and adds 'that if I think so I must send him your proper address, and that he wishes to do it merely from regard to your taste and genius.' I shall venture to answer this in the affirmative, as I am sure his address will contain nothing fulsome and because I am also sure you neither can nor ought to take such a compliment in ill part from so plain and honest a man as Mr Gilpin is.

I long prodigiously for *Authentic Windsor Anecdotes*<sup>11</sup> and from the hand of the author of the *Anecdotes on Painting*, who can paint them in their proper colours, black and all black,<sup>11a</sup> but I believe they will require still blacker colouring than black, and as Hamlet says a suit of sables.<sup>12</sup>

I return to York again on Monday merely to join the train of my friend Mr Duncombe<sup>13</sup> whom I have been intimate with from early youth. I shall return at the end of the week and shall then begin to prepare for an expedition to Nuneham where I shall hope to meet

8. Rev. William Gilpin (1724-1804), schoolmaster, artist, and miscellaneous writer; master of Cheam School, Surrey, 1752-77; vicar of Boldre, Hants, 1777-1804; popularizer of a taste for the picturesque. See William D. Templeman, *The Life and Work of William Gilpin*, Urbana, Illinois, 1939.

9. The first edition bears the date 1768, but may have been published late in 1767. The second edition was printed by March 1768 (Templeman, *op. cit.* 79-83).

10. See *post* 27 Jan. 1781.

11. What Mason wished to hear about was the Windsor Parliamentary election 8 Sept. 1780. The Court candidate, Peniston Portlock Powney (d. 1794) defeated Admiral Keppel, one of the heroes of the Opposition. The King played an active part in the electioneering, but, to the amuse-

ment of the Opposition, some of his children supported Keppel. Although he lost at Windsor, Keppel was returned to Parliament for Surrey. See *Last Journals* ii. 329-30; HW to Mann 19 Sept. 1780 and to Lady Ossory 23 Sept. 1780; Lord Albemarle, *Memoirs of the Marquis of Rockingham and His Contemporaries*, 1852, ii. 424-5; GM 1794, lxiv pt i. 181.

11a. Mason may be thinking of a race-horse of this name, mentioned in HW to Lady Ossory 26 June 1773.

12. *Hamlet* III. ii. 138.

13. Henry Duncombe (ca 1728-1818), of Copgrove, near Knaresborough; M.P. Yorkshire 1780-96. Duncombe was the candidate in 1780 of the Yorkshire Association, put forward to oppose Lascelles. He was elected 27 Sept. See Gooder, *op. cit.* ii. 110-1, 149.

you. The good Lord of that place made me a visit here in my absence, from Mr Sedley's<sup>24</sup> near Nottingham, and waited for me ineffectually three days.<sup>25</sup> A plague on politics, say I, that have robbed me of his company.

Yours most truly,

W. MASON

To MASON, Sunday 24 September 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 125-8.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 24, 1780.

**I** CONGRATULATE you on your success<sup>1</sup> and rejoice in it more from the aspect of the blossoms of virtue than from any expectation of fruits: and yet I am persuaded that if brought to maturity, it must be by temper, and not by being forced in hot-beds.<sup>2</sup> Violence, especially in opposition, neither lasts, nor produces lasting benefits. The enormous deviations of late from the constitution will never be corrected permanently by contrary extremes—and to induce the nation to labour its restitution, it must be convinced that the necessary medicines tend to bring back the habit of body that can be proved to have bestowed the most vigorous state of happiness. Novelty of which the effects are to be experimental and uncertain, will never unite a variety of minds in one system. I am not bigoted to the specific mode of the old constitution because old; nor think it absolutely perfect—but all experience teaches us that a mass of people will

14. Nuthall Temple,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles NW. of Nottingham (Robert Thoroton, *History of Nottinghamshire*, ed. John Throsby, 1797, ii. 255-6). Henry Venables-Vernon (sometime Sedley) (1747-1829), 3d Bn Vernon of Kinderton, 1813, was the 4th son of Lord Harcourt's recently deceased father-in-law, Lord Vernon; m. (1) (1779) Elizabeth Rebecca Anne Nash, otherwise Sedley, illegitimate dau. and testamentary heir of Sir Charles Sedley, 2d Bt. After his marriage he took the name of Sedley by royal license. He m. (2) (1795) Alice Lucy Whiteford, and on succeeding to the peerage discontinued the name of Sedley.

15. 'I wish I may have the comfort to receive a line from your Lordship, to tell me you have quite forgiven my absence from Aston. I shall have enough to suffer from Palgrave on that account without your resentment; the solitary Earl cooling his heels among my bantams, when the electioneering parson was getting drunk at York, will be an immortal topic of ridicule from that quarter' (Mason to Harcourt 9 Oct. 1780, *Harcourt Papers* vii. 71).

1. In opposing Lascelles.

2. That is, in associations for Parliamentary reform.

be so bigoted, and will sooner be allured by names than by reasonings. Their enemies too will be strengthened by preaching up the loveliness of the very constitution they have violated, if deviations from it are recommended as remedies.

I could say still much more against violence, but that seems unnecessary. The episode of Lord George Gordon proved I was not mistaken. It was at the eve of frightening all the world into a *demand* of military government. I go farther: it is my opinion that the deepest schemers of absolute power long for insurrections: and if I do not refine too much, I think I can descry that wish in the total neglect of all prevention of the late riots; these are but the outlines of my thoughts *on one side*.<sup>3</sup> We shall perhaps agree better in those *on the other* where I discern as many defects, as I observe voluntary errors in those they oppose. The result of both is despair; I foresee nothing but ruin, composed of various calamities. My time of life makes me fly to that ungenerous comfort of paltry old men, what does it signify to me who am going out of the world?

One chapter in all this folio of follies does astonish me—I mean the conduct of France and Spain. They congregate all Europe against us to have the childish satisfaction of smutting our face! say if you please, for the postponed malice of destroying us in detail—but is that a stroke of policy, when they might crush us at a blow? I am tempted to suspect our ministers of being Machiavels. They seem indeed to have no object but of undoing their own country, but are they not rather occupied in swaying the cabinets of Versailles and Madrid, and confounding their plans? Was not it Agathocles, who when besieged in Syracuse, invaded Carthage?<sup>4</sup>

Like you, I willingly turn from politics of which I am heartily sick, to pleasanter themes.

My humility is so predominant that I am afraid of pushing it to affectation; upon my conscience, I had rather waive the distinction your friend Mr Gilpin is willing to pay me. Any interested view he cannot have, for I have neither wealth nor credit, and were it not presumption, would add, never *will* have either. But it is solemnly true that I have so mean an opinion of myself that I know not how to consent to any honour. Genius I absolutely have not—taste if you

3. That is, the administration.

4. Agathocles (ca 360 B.C.–289 B.C.), King of Syracuse, who, when besieged in

311 by the Carthaginians under Hamilcar, carried the war into Africa.



please—for of that I should be no more vain than of personal beauty—but I have so much littleness in my mind, such a want of virtue, that any praise to my understanding makes me cast my eyes inwards with contrition and disgust. Would not an idol of mud blush if it could, at seeing itself crowned with laurel!—having made my confession to you, my confessor, do what you please, but save me from compliments, and from *Honourables*<sup>5</sup>—there I am proud not humble. I am thoroughly convinced that that wretched ray of an earldom procured me half my little fame. Things I have published without my name, though not worse than their baptized brethren, have perished in their merited obscurity.<sup>6</sup> I can smile at it but at least it makes me set no value on my literary reputation.—It is not derogating from these professions that I am on the point of publishing my last volume of *Painters*.<sup>7</sup> On the contrary, I have fixed on this moment as the most favourable to the little notice I desire should be taken of it.

I will certainly meet you at Nuneham. Tell me precisely when you will be there; you will not see me happy: I am not now, I dread every day receiving an account of the death of my dear old friend Madame du Deffand. The last letter from Paris left me small hopes.<sup>8</sup> Adieu.

Yours most cordially,

H. W.

TO MASON, Friday 13 October 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 128–30.

Nuneham, Oct. 13, 1780.

**I** AM heartily vexed at my disappointment. I have not only not found you here, but find you will not come till I am gone.<sup>1</sup> I begged you to tell me your motions, but heard not a word of you. I delayed

5. Gilpin did address HW as 'Honourable' in his dedication.

6. This was not true of his *Castle of Otranto*.

7. The printing had been completed by 13 April 1771 (*Journal of the Printing-Office* 16) and the volume was published 9 Oct. 1780 (*ibid.* 19). See *post* 13 Oct. 1780.

8. The letter, dated 10 Sept., was from Jean-François Wiart, Mme du Deffand's secretary (*DU DEFFAND* v. 246–7). Mme du Deffand died 23 Sept. 1780.

1. HW went to Nuneham 11 Oct. and stayed three days (HW to Lady Ossory 10 Oct. and 1 Nov. 1780). Mason wrote to

and delayed till it grew too late in the year for me to venture being from home lest the gout should arrive. It is more provoking that you have been flinging away your time on a turnpike meeting,<sup>2</sup> a certain way to be sure to overthrow despotism! I should like to see a letter from Brutus to Cassius, telling him that he hoped to stab Cæsar to the heart by setting aside a tool of the tyrant, whom he intended to make surveyor of the Appian Way. If Horace had been in a plot, I should tell him, were I Cassius, that he would have been better employed in writing a satire on—I have forgotten all my Roman history, and so I will suppose some instance that would answer to Johnson's billingsgate on Milton,<sup>3</sup> or Soame Jenyns's ode on Horace and Virgil;<sup>4</sup> in short and in plain English, you that have no business but with immortality, are squabbling in vestries, or in elections that signify no more than vestries; are wrapping up a matchless talent in the coarse rubber of a country tavern. Prithee leave England to its folly, to its ruin, to the Scotch. They have reduced it to a skeleton, and the bones will stick in their own throats; you will find nothing but *Io Pæans* on Lord Cornwallis.<sup>5</sup> The Court has lost some elections, but who are come in but banditti, whom they will buy the first week they come to town?

I have left with Lord Harcourt for you my new old last volume of *Painters*.<sup>6</sup> You need not turn it over, for there is not a syllable you

Lord Harcourt 9 Oct.: 'I purpose to be on my wheels next Thursday, the 13th [12th], and to go to Papplewick, near Nottingham, that day; the next we shall set off for Lord John Cavendish's, near Northampton, as fast as Mr Montagu's pair of black horses can carry us . . . : there we hope to arrive by Saturday noon, and to depart the Monday following. . . . After a day at Mr Montagu's lodge, in Salcey Forest, I proceed *post* from Brackley to Nuneham, but then Bicester intervenes, and a visit at Middleton must be paid. . . . Well! I will reach Nuneham as soon as ever I can' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 70-1).

2. A meeting of the trustees or commissioners of a turnpike or toll-road (OED *sub* 'turnpike' 9, quotations dated 1764 and 1843). Mason's trusteeship is mentioned in a clause in his will (29 April 1794): 'I give and bequeath to my successor and successors the rectors of Aston and to the churchwardens of the parish for the time being

all the principal and interest due of my money now vested in the turnpike-road between Worksop and Attercliffe in trust.'

3. In the *Lives of the Poets*.

4. Apparently an allusion to Soame Jenyns's *Ode*, the preface to which HW considered an attack on Mason and Gray. See *ante* 19 May 1780.

5. 'An express from Lord Cornwallis in Carolina, that with only 2000 men he had attacked General Gates at the head of 7000, and totally defeated him, with little loss of Royalists, and had killed 900 and taken 1000 prisoners. . . . This new success was likely to revive the King's obstinacy—as all advantages had done to the involving us deeper in ruin' (*Last Journals* ii. 331, 9 Oct. 1780). Cornwallis's victory at Camden, South Carolina, was the most spectacular that the English had won in the American war.

6. See *ante* 24 Sept. 1780.

have not seen but the short preface, and shorter dedication. By the latter you see I do not court popularity.<sup>7</sup>

If you have a mind to be very obliging after disappointing me so much, you will make four posts more and come to Strawberry. If you do not I hope Bishop Hurd will be Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal, Mr Smelt *intendant de la province de York*,<sup>8</sup> and Dr Johnson licenser of the press, *de par le roi*; and then I hope you will have a mind to write again, and get nobody to print it.

PS. This place is more Elysian than ever, the river full to the brim, and the church by one touch of Albano's pencil is become a temple, and a principal feature of one of the most beautiful landscapes in the world.<sup>9</sup>

From MASON, ca Sunday 29 October 1780

Missing.

To MASON, Wednesday 1 November 1780

Printed from Mitford ii. 130-3.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 1, 1780.

I OWN I was heartily vexed at your not letting me know when you would be at Nuneham, that I might have contrived to meet you there, but what you have sent me<sup>1</sup> would wash out any stain—all the perfumes of Arabia do sweeten your little hand, the grey goose quill that is therein (for as Millamant says, I am very fond of the poets to-

7. It is dedicated to the Duke of Richmond, a leader of the Opposition and out of favour at Court. HW wrote, 'It is not to court protection to this work; it is not to celebrate your Grace's virtues and abilities, which want no panegyric; it is to indulge the sentiments of respect and esteem, that I take the liberty of prefixing your name to this volume. . . .'

8. Leonard Smelt had a seat at Langton, Yorks, Mason's parish. See *post* 5 March 1783, n. 4.

9. 'In passing the arcade on the north side of the house, the west end of the church, the entrance to which is a semi-rotunda of columns supporting a dome, is seen through an opening in the trees, and appears like a small temple' (George Simon, Earl Harcourt, 'Description of Nuneham Courtenay in 1806,' *Harcourt Papers* iii. 200).

1. Missing and not identified; doubtless a satire.

day<sup>2</sup>) *in his heart's blood is wet*.<sup>3</sup> When you write so you may let the world want the rest of your blank verse<sup>4</sup> and leave me to be

He who erewhile the happy garden sung.<sup>5</sup>

Yes, I am solicitous about your immortal fame, and care about little else. Tully's last works buoyed up when all his patriot endeavours sunk in the common shore of his country. This country is as lost as his, and nothing can save it. Do you want a new instance? Dr Hunter<sup>6</sup> that Scotch nightman,<sup>7</sup> had the impudence t'other day to pour out at his anatomic lecture a more outrageous Smeltiad than Smelt himself, and imputed all our disgraces and ruin to the Opposition.<sup>8</sup> Burke was present, and said he had heard of political arithmetic,<sup>9</sup> but never before of political anatomy, yet for a Scot to dare thus in the heart of London, and be borne, is proof enough that the nation itself is lost beyond redemption. The new Parliament as I foresaw it would be, is exactly what the last was. Do you require a proof of that too, besides the same standing majority?<sup>10</sup> Here is one: Rigby,<sup>10a</sup> who exactly this time twelvemonth tried to betray and blow up the administration,<sup>11</sup> was yesterday its Drawcansir,<sup>12</sup> and I hope you allow he at

2. 'Mrs Fainall.—You are very fond of Sir John Suckling today, Millamant, and the poets' (Congreve, *The Way of the World* IV. i).

3. An amalgam of *Macbeth* V. i. 55–6 and 'Chevy Chase' (*ante* 16 May 1777, n. 9).

4. I.e., *The English Garden*.

5. Adapted from *Paradise Regained*, I. 1. HW's essay 'On Modern Gardening' was printed in the fourth volume of the *Anecdotes of Painting*.

6. William Hunter (1718–83), M.D., anatomist and obstetrician, brother of the more eminent John Hunter; physician to Queen Charlotte 1764–83; F.R.S., 1767; F.S.A., 1768; professor of anatomy to the Royal Academy, 1768; HW's occasional correspondent. For HW's relations with Hunter, which were friendly until they were cooled by political differences, see Jane M. Oppenheimer, *New Aspects of John and William Hunter*, New York, 1946, pp. 145–56.

7. Grave-robber.

8. No text or account of the lecture has been found, but it was probably the introductory lecture to his winter series in

1780–1. 'Hunter was accustomed to start his winter lecture series in October, and frequently initiated the course with a general lecture attended by non-scientists' (Oppenheimer, *op. cit.* 154).

9. A phrase apparently invented by Sir William Petty (1623–87), who used it in the title of several tracts dealing with vital statistics (DNB; OED *sub* 'political' 6).

10. Charles Wolfran Cornwall, the ministerial candidate for the speakership, was elected on the first day of the new Parliament, 31 Oct. 1780, by a vote of 203 to 134 (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 807).

10a. Richard Rigby (1722–88), politician.

11. Rigby was associated with 'that little faction' that 'flattered themselves that their separation [from the ministry] would blow up Lord North' (*ante* ca 19 Nov. 1779). See Jenkinson to the King 19 Nov. 1779, *Corr. Geo.* III iv. 489–90.

12. A bellicose character in Buckingham's *Rehearsal*. Rigby spoke with the supporters of the administration in opposing Sir Fletcher Norton as Speaker. In the debate the Opposition members had complained that Sir Fletcher was being dis-

least can descry the better of the lay;<sup>12a</sup> Charles Fox indeed told Lord George Germaine that he was a coward as he had always been, and was stabbing in the dark;<sup>13</sup> yet surely that was unjust; Mr Adam and Mr Fullerton attempted to stab in open daylight<sup>14</sup>—we are above *détours*.

I know no news but that the Prince of Wales is to have a bit of an establishment, yet his court is still to be kept in the nursery;<sup>15</sup> however there will be a little more room, for the Right Reverend Father in God, Prince Frederic is to be weaned and sent abroad.<sup>16</sup>

His Holiness the Archbishop<sup>17</sup> had much ado last night to christen Prince Alfred.<sup>18</sup> I wonder as everybody is equally fit for everything, that they did not make the pontiff and the wet-nurse<sup>19</sup> change offices. Sir John Mordaunt's red ribband is to be given to Rodney, and not to Lord Cornwallis<sup>20</sup>—I suppose because not crimson enough for him.

carded by the ministry because he had sided in the last Parliament with those who voted against the influence of the Crown (*ante* 7 April 1780). In a blustering speech Rigby denied the relevance of the charges. 'As to the idea of places and placemen, that language would ever be held, while parties continued, but he should hear it with great indifference, till he was told that no persons were seeking places' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 806).

12a. I.e., the better bet.

13. The phrase is not reported in the summary of Fox's speech published in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 800-2. Lord George Germaine had moved the election of Cornwall, but in his speech paid the highest compliments to Sir Fletcher Norton. 'Fox said, that was stabbing him in the dark, but it was like Lord George's well-known cowardice' (*Last Journals* ii. 332).

14. See *ante* 29 Nov. 1779 and 22 March 1780.

15. 'A sort of household is about to be fixed for the Prince of Wales. He is to have a few state officers appointed, but is still to live with the King and Queen' (*London Chronicle* 28-31 Oct. 1780, xlviii. 410). The King's reluctance to extend his eldest son's personal liberty was at this time the subject of much gossip. The Prince, who became eighteen 12 August, was given his own apartments in Buckingham Palace at

the end of December 1780 (*Last Journals* ii. 340-1; HW to Mann 31 Dec. 1780).

16. Frederick Augustus (1763-1827), Bp of Osnaburgh 1764-1803; cr. (1784) E. of Ulster and D. of York and Albany. 'It is said that his Royal Highness the Bishop of Osnaburgh is going to the Continent, and is to travel in his character of Prince Bishop' (*London Chronicle* 28-31 Oct. 1780, xlviii. 410). The Prince was sent abroad on an extended tour at the end of the year (*Last Journals* ii. 341).

17. Hon. Frederick Cornwallis.

18. George III's ninth son (1780-2). 'Yesterday evening [30 Oct.] at seven o'clock the ceremony of christening the young prince [born 22 Sept.] was performed in the Great Council Chamber of his Majesty's palace, by his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury. . . . His Royal Highness was named Alfred' (*London Chronicle* 31 Oct.-2 Nov. 1780, xlviii. 418). A description of 'the ceremonies and apparatus used in christening the royal children' is in *London Courant* 6 Oct. 1780.

19. 'Mrs Williams, wife of Capt. Williams, is appointed wet-nurse to her Majesty' (*London Chronicle* 10-12 Oct. 1780, xlviii. 350).

20. The death on 23 Oct. of General Sir John Mordaunt (1697-1780), K.B., 1749, left a vacancy in the Order of the Bath. Rodney did not fill it. He received the red ribbon 14 Nov. 1780, but only as a supernumerary

There! I am glad I have got through the chapter of politics; here is something better—

When Macreth served in Arthur's crew,  
He said to Rumbold, 'Black my shoe'  
To which he answered, 'Ay Bob.'  
But when returned from India's land  
And grown too proud to brook command—  
He sternly answered, 'Nay Bob.'<sup>21</sup>

I am told this is at least three years old,<sup>22</sup> no matter; good ink like wine is not the worse for age.

I wish you had told me if you did not find Nuneham in more beauty than ever. I do not know the paradise on earth I prefer to it, with its Adam and Eve: who may comfort themselves with having no children, when they recollect that the first-born committed murder *with the jaw-bone of an ass*,<sup>23</sup> a deadly weapon I am sure!

Quaker or not<sup>24</sup> I do object to my valuable *researches*.<sup>25</sup> I never searched anywhere but in foolish books and for no end but to divert myself. It is such folk as Dr Milles that *research*; and when they have tumbled out of their depth, call their fall, elucidations. I never pretend to anything, I never did anything that signified and I will not subscribe to compliments, which would look as if I liked them, yet I do not pretend to be humble, nor to dislike flattery; but then I choose to flatter myself, for that is the only flattery that is ever severe. I do not ask when you will come to town for then perhaps you will tell me.

With duty to Miss Fauquier, how I delight to see her

Throw her broad black exterminating eye,  
And crush some new gilt courtier's loyal lie.<sup>26</sup>

member of the Order, which he remained until the death of General Richard Pierson in 1781. See William A. Shaw, *The Knights of England*, 1906, i. 173.

21. Mackreth began his career as a billiard-marker at White's (*ante* Oct. 1774), the original proprietor of which was Robert Arthur (d. 1761). Sir Thomas Rumbold, an ostentatious 'nabob,' was likewise a man of humble origins. See James M. Holzman, *The Nabobs in England*, New York, 1926, p. 39; Mason's *Satirical Poems* 119.

22. Sir Egerton Brydges said that the epigram, which remains undated, was at-

tributed to Lord Chancellor Camden (*Autobiography*, 1834, i. 193). For variants see Holzman, *loc. cit.*, and N&Q 1862, 3d ser., ii. 199.

23. HW's biblical references are usually more accurate than this. The missing letter of ca 29 Oct. from Mason may have contained a clue to HW's meaning.

24. This also seems to be an echo of the missing letter.

25. It is clear that Mason had described to HW Gilpin's proposed dedication (*ante* 20 and 24 Sept. 1780). HW's remonstrance was in vain. See *post* 27 Jan. 1781.

26. Mason alludes to the phrase 'ex-

PS. I am reading l'Abbé Richard's *Voyage d'Italie*, in six volumes.<sup>27</sup> He pretends to give an account of the history and governments of the several states, and though it is heavy, it is not bad; but one passage diverted me, speaking of Piperno, the Privernum of the Volsci, he mentions Camilla as a parishioner there, and says, 'L'histoire de cette belle guerrière (in Virgil) mérite d'être lue.'<sup>28</sup> There is a *research* for you. In the eighteenth century we can cite Virgil for true story as Caxton did three hundred years ago.<sup>29</sup>

## TO MASON, Thursday 4 January 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 133-5.

Thursday night late, Jan. 4, 1781.

I HAVE not written to you for several reasons. The best were that I had nothing to tell you, that you would wish to know, or like to hear. The worst is that I have been much out of order, first, with a complaint in my bowels, which being weak, the gout took the opportunity and joined it. Then I caught cold, and then was lame in my ankle, which turned to a cough; but all these shapes were I firmly believe the gout, which I have long known for a Harlequin, that can assume any form. I am now pretty well and sit down to chat with you; still I do not know where you are, but conclude if not at Aston that you will soon be there.

This good town is quite happy, for it has gotten a new plaything, a Dutch war;<sup>1</sup> and the folks that are to gain by privateering, have per-

terminating eye' in a letter to Harcourt 17 July 1786, and Harcourt in a MS note on the letter says that it occurs 'in some verses of Mr Walpole's,' referring to Miss Fauquier (MS in the possession of Vct Harcourt). Only these two lines have been found.

27. *Description historique et critique de l'Italie*, 1768-9 (first published 1766 at Dijon), by Abbé Jérôme Richard (fl. 1748-78), author and translator of historical, scientific, and fictional works (Bibl. Nat. Cat.). HW's marginalia occur throughout the six volumes in his copy, which is now WSL. He also refers to the work in his letter to Mann 7 Nov. 1780.

28. *Description* iv. 16. Opposite this HW has marked a large (sarcastic) exclamation point in his copy. (Camilla appears in Books vii and xi of the *Æneid*.)

29. In the *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* (ca 1474): 'Of hys [Æneas's] adventures and how he arryved at Cartage and after in ytalie, they that wyll see hyt, late hem rede virgyle in eneydos, and there they shall fynde hyt' (1894 reprint, ed. H. O. Sommer, ii. 683).

1. On 10 Nov. England sent a remonstrance to Holland on the discovery of papers which made it appear 'that the gentlemen of Amsterdam have been engaged in a clandestine correspondence with the American rebels from the month of August 1778, and that instructions and full powers have been given by them for

sualed those who are to pay the piper, to dance for joy.<sup>2</sup> In the midst of this exultation came accounts that would make anybody shudder, but an overgrown capital, who care for nothing but their daily bread, news, and *circenses*.<sup>3</sup> All Barbadoes and half Jamaica are annihilated. The inhabitants are buried or famishing. The shipping too has suffered deplorably.<sup>4</sup> The events in America are not more flattering. Leslie,<sup>5</sup> who had taken a walk into two or three open towns, one of which was Norfolk, that we burnt three or four years ago,<sup>6</sup> has been recalled<sup>7</sup> and is re-embarked, to try to save Lord Cornwallis, who has found the country as hostile as it was proclaimed to be friendly, and is in great danger too from five thousand men dispatched by Washington<sup>8</sup> to strengthen Gates.<sup>9</sup> An expedition sent against the Spanish settlements has been so totally destroyed by the climate that not a sin-

the conclusion of a treaty of indisputable amity with those rebels' (GM 1780, l. 541). Satisfaction not being received, a declaration of war against Holland was published 20 Dec. 1780 (ibid. 587). See *post* 30 March 1781 and n. 13.

2. 'Thus the year finished with the outset of a new war; yet the Scotch had so infatuated and poisoned the nation, that the Dutch war was popular, at least in the City, where the spirit of gaming had seized all ranks, and nothing was thought of but privateering' (*Last Journals* ii. 341-2).

3. I.e., horse-racing.

4. Letters and dispatches from the West Indies published in the newspapers in late December 1780 and early January 1781 describe the disastrous hurricanes that struck the islands in October 1780. See *London Chronicle* 28-30 Dec. 1780, 30 Dec. 1780-2 Jan. 1781, 2-4 Jan. 1781.

5. Hon. Alexander Leslie (1731-94), 3d son of Alexander, Earl of Leven and Melville; Lt-Col., 1766; Col. and aide-de-camp to the King, 1775; Brig.-Gen., 1776; Maj.-Gen., 1780 (*Scots Peerage* vi. 114-5). After Cornwallis's victory at Camden (*ante* 13 Oct. 1780), Sir Henry Clinton, the commander-in-chief of the British forces in America, sent Leslie with a body of troops from New York to Virginia to meet Cornwallis on his march north. Leslie found little opposition in Virginia, marched into Norfolk and Portsmouth, and there built fortifications (Henry Lee, *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the*

*United States*, ed. Robert E. Lee, New York, 1870, pp. 201-2).

6. In January-February 1776.

7. From Virginia and ordered to Charleston, South Carolina.

8. '30 [Dec. 1780]. The Court . . . did not own that . . . they had learnt the defeat of Colonel Ferguson [at King's Mountain, S.C., 7 Oct. 1780], and that Sir H. Clinton had recalled Leslie (who had actually re-embarked) to reinforce Lord Cornwallis, who had been very ill, and was marched 150 miles into the country with only 1300 men, and was then in great danger of being cut off, Washington having detached 3000 men to reinforce Gates' (*Last Journals* ii. 341). See Washington's general orders 27 Oct. 1780, *Writings of George Washington*, Washington, 1931-44, xx. 257-8.

9. Horatio Gates (1727-1806), after having served many years as an officer in the British Army, retired after the Seven Years' War, during which he had served in America, and in 1772, at the invitation of Washington, settled in what is now West Virginia. At the outbreak of the American war he was made a brigadier-general in the Continental army, and major-general in 1776. He was the hero of Saratoga, and in June 1780 was put in command of the southern department of the United States. He was relieved by General Nathanael Greene 2 Dec. 1780 (S. W. Patterson, *Horatio Gates*, New York, 1941, pp. 4, 398 *et passim*).



gle man is left alive. The officers to the number of twenty-five are all dead too.<sup>10</sup> My pen revolts at detailing such horrors! If I turn from them I have nothing else to tell you. I used to write of books as well as news, I have not seen one. Raspe's book<sup>11</sup> indeed is in the press and will appear in February;<sup>12</sup> I have been correcting the second sheet this evening.

Before Mr Stonhewer went out of town he told me you had left your Fresnoy in the hands of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who is to write notes to it.<sup>13</sup> I complain that you never showed it to me, but am content if it is near being published.

Mrs Delany has been ill<sup>14</sup> and is become very deaf. I saw Mr Frederic Montagu with her, and he has been with me and seems perfectly recovered.

My chief business with you is to ask when you come. I suppose you will not condescend to answer, for you have as many *humours* as Ancient Pistol. It don't signify; I have a plenary indulgence for the wayward modes of my friends: nay, like them better than the perfections of those I do not love, not that I believe the latter have one. Thus I prefer the letters you do not write to me, to the most sweet epistles from anybody from whom I should not wish to hear; you will say, one receives few such. I certainly do not, yet how many men wish for such! what is power but a desire of receiving thousands of flattering solicitations from the Lord knows whom! and an opportunity of being forced to oblige hundreds whom they wish at the Devil! well I am past sixty-three; you will not have me long, and then I think you will be a little sorry. Adieu.

10. In *Last Journals* ii. 343 (2 Jan. 1781) HW describes this as 'an expedition sent by Governor Dalling from Jamaica, of 1500 men.' Horatio Nelson, then a commander, was the senior naval officer in the expedition, which was sent by Dalling against Fort San Juan in Nicaragua in the spring of 1780. 'Of about 1800 people who were sent to . . . form the various dependencies of this expedition, few of the Europeans retained their health above sixteen days, and not more than 380 ever returned' (Benjamin Moseley, *A Treatise on Tropical Diseases; on Military Operations; and on the Climate of the West Indies*, 4th edn,

1803, p. 163). See also Nelson's *Dispatches and Letters*, ed. Sir N. H. Nicolas, 1845-6, i. 7-8, and Sir J. W. Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*, 1899-1930, iii. 340.

11. See *ante* 17 Jan. and 7 April 1780.

12. It was not published until May. See *post* 25 April and 6 May 1781.

13. See *ante* 12 Nov. 1779. Reynolds was slow in completing his notes, and not until 23 March 1782 did Mason write to HW that he had received them. The book was published early in 1783 (*post* 10 Feb. 1783).

14. See *Delany Correspondence* v. 585-6, vi. 1-6.

## FROM MASON, Sunday 21 January 1781

Printed from MS now WSL.

Aston near Sheffield, Jan. 21st, 1781.

YOUR last found me on a visit in the north (i.e. further north than York) after I had made my appearance at our committee on the 3d and taken upon me, not the office of a deputy, but all the principles of one by joining in the resolution which makes the printed address of that body to the electors, etc., the act and deed of the whole.<sup>1</sup> I fear that address will not quite quadrate with your sentiments,<sup>2</sup> but I must be bold to tell you that it does entirely with mine. So much so, that I believe had an association been formed on the same principles thirty years ago I should have been as ready to have joined it then, as at present, for I know of no moment since I have ever been able to think of political matters that the glaring defects of Parliamentary representation have not appeared to me in the same light which they do at present. However let us not dispute about the matter, as no consequences are ever likely to come from it,—*good or bad* in my sense or *bad or good* in yours. 'Tis the duty of an honest man to declare his sentiments when a public opportunity calls for it, in matters of such a kind as this. I have done so, and have thereby satisfied my conscience.

I now turn to answer what you obligingly call the chief business of

1. At the meeting of the Committee of the Yorkshire Association 3 Jan. 1781 it was resolved to send three deputies to London to confer with delegates from other associations petitioning Parliamentary reform, to provide the delegates with definite instructions, and to publish a memorial setting forth the aims of the Association (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 297–319).

2. Mason was right, though HW was unwilling to argue the matter (*post* 27 Jan. 1781). 'On the 3d of January [1781] a committee of 59 gentlemen of the Yorkshire Association had met at York, and had sent Mr Wyvill and two other deputies to London with very sober instructions, and restraining them to the pursuit of economy of public money and of lessening the influence of the Crown, and to the obtain-

ing one hundred additional county members, but waiving to a more proper time their former visions of short Parliaments, etc.; at the same time professing only the most legal steps, and forbidding the delegates to enter with any other delegates of counties and towns into any other measures than those prescribed, without consulting the committee. They also published an address to counties and towns, which prescribed what they had almost given up in their directions to their delegates and was more hostile to the Opposition than to the Court, and was consequently more agreeable to the Court than disagreeable. It was at once weak and proud, passionate and timid, and not likely to have more effect on the nation than on the Parliament' (*Last Journals* ii. 344).

your letter, vid. when I return to town? To tell you a secret, I left town merely that by appearing at York on the 3d I might avoid being appointed one of the deputies,<sup>3</sup> and I shall stay from town merely to avoid altercations with my friends on that subject. I do not mean with you, but with others of whom you wot well.<sup>4</sup> I therefore at present intend to stay in the country till late in the spring, and then shall be happy to smell your first roses at Strawberry, from thence perhaps go to Nuneham<sup>5</sup> and in August return to my residentiary imprisonment at York, which begins on the 11th of that month. This is my present plan and I hope nothing will prevent me from [following]<sup>5a</sup> it, though I foresee some family matters which may lead me to change my resolution and come sooner.

Mr Stonhewer will have in a few days a complete copy of my translation of Fresnoy with the text adjoined. In this state it will probably lie some time in the hope of being joined by some of Sir Joshua Reynolds's notes, the only thing that in these days will probably make it taken notice of by the public. If you choose to look it over you are very welcome so to do, but it is so dry and didactic that I fear it will tire you, on which account I never thought it worth while to show it to you. If you *do* read it, all the eulogium I expect will be that I have bestowed more pains about it than the thing was worth. But I have much greater hopes of your applause on my fourth book of *The English Garden* which is now almost finished, and shall go to the York Press very soon.<sup>6</sup> The subject, you know, is that of ornamental buildings, menageries, conservatories, etc., and with this I have contrived to interweave a pathetic story throughout,<sup>7</sup> so that the

3. That is, if he had been in London he would have been appointed a deputy to the meetings to be held there.

4. Probably Lord John Cavendish and other Rockinghamites who were opposed to specific measures recommended by the Yorkshire Association. See *ante* 9 and 17 April 1780.

5. Mason visited Nuneham and SH in July; see *post* 3 July 1781 and n. 3.

5a. Mason wrote 'altering.'

6. See *post* 29 March 1781. HW acknowledged receiving a copy 9 Sept. 1781.

7. The story recounts the woes of Alcander, a young man engaged in the ornamentation of his ancestral estate, whose occupation provides a happy illustration

of Mason's precepts. Alcander one morning encounters a shipwrecked maiden named Nerina on a neighbouring beach. He falls in love with her, but Nerina, though grateful and amiable, suppressed 'that sympathetic flame which love like his should kindle.' Alcander continues the improvement of his manor according to the most enlightened principles of gardening, hoping that his taste in ornamentation will win her heart. Soon a stranger arrives, and Nerina is overcome by emotion; her heart had in the past been pledged to him, because of services he had rendered her father and herself. His name was Cleon. Since she had fallen in love with Alcander, the emotional conflict breaks her heart.

whole book will be (if you can have any idea from the term) an episodico-didactico-pathetico-politico farrago unlike everything that ever was written or will be written. The improvers will like it for its taste, the ladies for its tenderness, Opposition for its Americality, yet of this last it has no more than was absolutely necessary for the fable, and that so gently touched, that even bishops will be forced to applaud it for its humanity, I had almost said Christianity. I wish it was possible to have it published on the Fast morning<sup>8</sup> on this very account.

Pray let me have Raspe's book as soon as published. And let me hope that in spite of what you are pleased to call my Ancient-Pistolish humours that I shall still be favoured with both your political and literary Mercuries, as time serves. I know of no man to whom they will be more acceptable nor to whom they will on your part be more charitably administered. I solicit them particularly at present, because I expect Palgrave (whom I left at Mr Weddel's) to sojourn with me some time in his way southward. He comes the latter end of this week and if I have nothing to entertain him with but the *London Packet*,<sup>8a</sup> my only intelligencer, he will soon, I fear, quit his quarters. If, therefore, you write me anything that you wish him not to see (for something he must see when a letter comes from you), write, as the secretaries of state do, *most secret* before the paragraph—what is only *private and particular* he will have a right of perusing. You see, I have not forgot the mysteries I learned when Gray put me (as he said when I went to Lord Holdernesse) apprentice to a secretary of state.<sup>9</sup> And now having scribbled so much that I must be forced to put it into an envelope,<sup>10</sup> I conclude with desiring and beseeching that *I may have you long*, because the longer that I have you, I am sure I shall be the more sorry to part with you, but had I lost you many years

After her death the disconsolate Cleon reveals that Nerina was the daughter of a preacher in Boston, killed by the British in the course of the American war. Cleon goes on his melancholy way and Alcander, pursuing his avocation, builds a hermit's cell on his estate, where he and Melancholy 'mean to fix Nerina's bust.'

8. 21 Feb. 1781, proclaimed as such by the King 12 Jan. (*London Chronicle* 11–13 Jan. 1781, xlix. 48).

8a. A thrice-weekly evening newspaper.

9. 'I remember, when first I went from Cambridge into Lord Holdernesse's family, Gray, who went up to town in the same stage-coach, told people in London "that he was come up to put Mason an apprentice to a secretary of state"' (Mason to Lord Harcourt 20 Feb. 1792, *Harcourt Papers* vii. 191).

10. The fourth side is completely filled. The cover is missing.

ago, assure yourself my sorrow would not have been *so little* as the Corsican Fairy.<sup>11</sup>

*Dixi.*

TO MASON, Saturday 27 January 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 139-43.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 27, 1781.

WE shall certainly have no difference about the Yorkshire address or directions. It would be very idle to enter into an altercation about the mode of wrapping up a medicine, which the patient never intends to swallow. It is true, I think *the disease* cannot dislike the prescription, for it finds more fault with half of the doctors,<sup>1</sup> than with the distemper, but I look on the case as desperate; unless, as has been known to happen, poverty and fasting should root out the scurvy, when neither the College<sup>2</sup> nor quacks could make any impression, and we are likely to experience whether fasting can expel the kind of devils by which we have been visited. Indeed I have many reasons for not disputing with you, I hate disputes. I have much higher opinion too of your abilities than of my own; and I suspect my own prejudices, and I know that persons who dispute, though with their friends, grow more angry with those they are angry with last, than with their enemies; as I see has happened to your York Association, which has wandered from the national cause to a county quarrel; and my last reason is that I despair. I think this country ruined; what may be saved from the general wreck, I do not know, perhaps shall not see. Mr Hartley's system,<sup>3</sup> had it been adopted, was in my eyes the best to have been pursued, I mean, all possible efforts to put an end to the American war. He has proved that the continuation is positive destruction, any piddling may amuse, or turn attention

11. A midget who was shown as a curiosity. Boswell went to see her at Edinburgh in 1775: 'It was a very well made woman not above three feet high. It was said she was born in Ireland, but *Corsican* was a good show title' (*Boswell Papers* xi. 15).

2. The Royal College of Physicians.

3. A system of conciliation expounded in *Letters on the American War*, 1778, by David Hartley (1732-1813), statesman and scientist, friend of Benjamin Franklin, and M. P. Hull 1774-80, 1782-4. HW discusses the pamphlet in *Last Journals* ii. 232-3.

1. That is, the Opposition; see *ante* 21 Jan. 1781, n. 2.

aside, but in this age of the world to arm a stripling with a sling and a pebble will not fell a giant; but why be metaphoric? ruin comes on with strides. Russia has sent us a thundering monitory:<sup>4</sup> and probably we shall soon be at war with the whole armed neutrality, which, like idiots, we imagined meant no more than neutral armament; well, I shall not be very sorry if all Europe combined compels us to make peace. I long to be able to die in quiet, we shall be but a little brow-beaten island, and as *that* is not the England in which I was born, I must be excused if I do not care about it.

I have been and am still very unhappy about General Conway. With a broken arm he embarked in a storm for Jersey at a moment's warning.<sup>5</sup> He could not mount the ladder of the frigate; a sailor gave him a tug and wrenched that very arm. For two days and nights he was tossed in a furious tempest, could not reach his island, and at last was thrown on Plymouth. He returned quite lame again, with a fever from pain and a violent rheumatism from cold, and has kept his bed almost ever since. His last year's speech has just been published.<sup>6</sup> Woodfall<sup>7</sup> sent him word that he had notes of it and was going to print it, on which Mr Conway thought it better to give him his own notes.<sup>8</sup> I like much of it, though he and I do not agree in his sentiments about the recovery of America: for though I do not love to dispute, especially with my best friends, I cannot give up my opinions, if they are my opinions: but then I do not maintain that I must be in

4. A remonstrance against British interference with Russian shipping, in violation of Russia's rights as a neutral (*London Chronicle* 23-5 Jan. 1781, xlix. 82).

5. '8th [Jan.]. An account that near 2000 French had landed from open boats on Jersey on the 6th, and had surprised the lieutenant-governor Corbett in his bed. The Council sent orders to Sir James Wallace, at Portsmouth, to go to Jersey with what force he could, and to General Conway [the governor of Jersey] to repair thither. The express went to him at Park Place at eleven; he was in town by three, though with a broken arm not quite recovered, and set out in two hours for Portsmouth' (*Last Journals* ii. 343). Conway had broken his arm in a fall in September (HW to Lady Ossory 27 Sept. and to Thomas Walpole 28 Sept. 1780). The Jersey troops rallied and repulsed the invasion.

6. *The Speech of General Conway . . . on moving in the House of Commons (on the 5th of May, 1780) 'That leave be given to bring in a bill for quieting the troubles now reigning in the British colonies in America, and for enabling his Majesty to appoint commissioners with full powers to treat, and conclude upon terms of conciliation with the said colonies,'* 1781. HW has noted in his copy (now WSL), below the year, 'January 23d.'

7. Henry Sampson Woodfall (1739-1805), printer and journalist; publisher of the *Public Advertiser*, 1760-93.

8. Woodfall's name does not appear on the pamphlet, which was printed for the bookseller Thomas Cadell, but apparently Woodfall not only printed it but also prepared the text expanded from Conway's own notes.

the right, except in judging for myself, and that leave which I take, I should be very absurd, nay, very impertinent, if I did not allow, but alas! he and you and I might as well be disputing about the time of keeping Easter: I most gladly turn away from politics to other matters.

Mr Gilpin has sent me his book and dedication.<sup>9</sup> I thank you for the latter being so moderate, yet he talks of my researches, which makes me smile; I know as Gray would have said, how little I have *researched*, and what slender pretensions are mine to so pompous a term. Apropos to Gray, Johnson's life, or rather criticism on his odes, is come out;<sup>10</sup> a most wretched, dull, tasteless, *verbal* criticism, yet timid too. But he makes amends, he admires Thompson and Aken-side,<sup>11</sup> and Sir Richard Blackmore,<sup>12</sup> and has reprinted Dennis's criticism on *Cato*, to save time and swell his pay.<sup>13</sup> In short as usual, he has proved that he has no more ear than taste. Mrs Montague and all her Mænades intend to tear him limb from limb for despising their moppet Lord Lyttelton.<sup>14</sup> You will be diverted to hear that Mr

9. The dedication of the third edition of Gilpin's *Essay on Prints*, retained in subsequent editions, is 'To the Honourable Horace Walpole in deference to his taste in the polite arts; and the valuable researches he has made to improve them.' HW's copy is now WSL.

10. HW seems to have thought that Johnson's life of Gray was actually published, although by 20 Feb. he had discovered his mistake (see *post* 3 and 19 Feb.). It appeared in vol. x of *Prefaces, Biographical and Critical, to the Works of the English Poets*, published (with vols v-ix) 17 May 1781 (R. W. Chapman and Allen T. Hazen, 'Johnsonian Bibliography: A Supplement to Courtney,' *Proceedings of the Oxford Bibliographical Society*, 1938, p. 156; *Morning Herald* 17 May 1781). What HW had actually seen (if indeed he is not merely reporting hearsay) is not certain, but perhaps it was a transcript, made from one of the few advance sets that HW says (*post* 19 Feb.) Johnson had given away, of the critical section of Gray's life. (An advance set of vols i-iv, published in June 1779, was sent to the King in March 1779; see *The Letters of Samuel Johnson*, ed. R. W. Chapman, Oxford, 1952, ii. 281: No. 606). Although the four other lives alluded to in the next sentence are also in vols v-x,

indicating that HW was informed at least as to the general contents of the forthcoming volumes, there is no reason to suppose that he was not speaking accurately (with respect to these volumes, not the earlier ones) when he told Boswell (see *post* 22 May) that he had 'not yet' seen them.

11. James Thomson (1700-48), author of *The Seasons*, and Mark Akenside (1721-70), author of *The Pleasures of Imagination*.

12. Sir Richard Blackmore (d. 1729), physician to Queen Anne. Johnson praised his philosophical poem, *Creation*.

13. The commentary by John Dennis (1657-1734) is printed in *Prefaces* v, 'Life of Addison,' pp. 108-46. Dr Chapman points out that Johnson's 'absurdly modest honorarium was not related to bulk.' Johnson asked for 200 guineas, and was given 300, which he considered 'generous.'

14. Johnson's 'expressing with a dignified freedom what he really thought of George, Lord Lyttelton, gave offence to some of the friends of that nobleman, and particularly produced a declaration of war against him from Mrs Montagu, the ingenious essayist on Shakespeare, between whom and his Lordship a commerce of reciprocal compliments had long been carried on' (Boswell, *Johnson* iv. 64).

Gibbon has quarrelled with me. He lent me his second volume<sup>15</sup> in the middle of November. I returned it with a most civil panegyric.<sup>16</sup> He came for more incense, I gave it, but alas! with too much sincerity, I added, 'Mr Gibbon, I am sorry *you* should have pitched on so disgusting a subject as the Constantinopolitan history. There is so much of the Arians and Eunomians, and semi-Pelagians; and there is such a strange contrast between Roman and Gothic manners, and so little harmony between a Consul Sabinus<sup>17</sup> and a Ricimer, Duke of the palace,<sup>18</sup> that though you have written the story as well as it could be written, I fear few will have patience to read it.' He coloured; all his round features squeezed themselves into sharp angles; he screwed up his button-mouth and rapping his snuff-box, said, 'It had never been put together before'—*so well* he meant to add—but gulped it. He meant *so well* certainly, for Tillemont, whom he quotes in every page, has done the very thing.<sup>19</sup> Well from that hour to this I have never seen him, though he used to call once or twice a week; nor has sent me the third volume,<sup>20</sup> as he promised. I well knew his vanity, even about his ridiculous face and person, but thought he had too much sense to avow it so palpably. The history is admirably written, especially in the characters of Julian<sup>21</sup> and Athanasius,<sup>22</sup> in both which he has piqued himself on impartiality—but the style is far less sedulously enamelled than the first volume, and there is flattery to the Scots that would choke anything but Scots,<sup>23</sup> who can gobble

15. Of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. The second and third volumes were not published until 1 March 1781 (Jane E. Norton, *A Bibliography of the Works of Edward Gibbon*, 1940, p. 49).

16. HW's letter to Gibbon is missing.

17. Flavius Sabinus (ca 8–69), elder brother of the emperor Vespasian, mentioned by Gibbon in chap. 16 (i. 539). HW mistakenly calls Sabinus consul, probably confusing him with his son, Titus Flavius Sabinus (d. 84), consul in 82.

18. Ricimer (d. 472), son of a Suevian chief; actual ruler of Rome, through puppet emperors, from 456 to his death. Gibbon describes his career in chap. 36 (iii. 464–6), but since HW had not yet received the volume in which the account appeared, his choice of the name seems to have been merely illustrative.

19. Louis-Sébastien le Nain de Tillemont (1637–98) was the author of *Histoire des*

*empereurs et des autres princes qui ont régné durant les six premiers siècles de l'église*, 1690–7, and *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique*, 1693–1712. These works are cited frequently by Gibbon, but HW has exaggerated his dependence on them.

20. Since it had not yet been published, it may be that Gibbon was still revising it. When volumes ii and iii were published Gibbon sent them as a present to HW (post 3 March 1781).

21. Flavius Claudius Julianus (ca 331–63), 'Julian the apostate,' Roman emperor 361–3 and leader of a revival of paganism.

22. Athanasius (ca 298–373), saint, and doctor of the Church; patriarch of Alexandria 328–73; opponent of the Arian heresy.

23. The flattery is almost undiscoverable. The Scots are said to 'have multiplied, by an equal and voluntary union, the honours



feathers as readily as thistles. David Hume and Adam Smith are *legislators* and sages,<sup>24</sup> but the homage is intended for his patron, Lord Loughborough<sup>25</sup>—so much for literature and its fops! except what interests me a thousand times more and which I kept for the *bonne bouche*, your Fresnoy and 4th *Garden*; I shall certainly ask for the former the instant I return (for I go tomorrow to Park Place, to see Mr Conway, who cannot yet get to town) but not to interfere a moment with Sir Joshua Reynolds, who will execute his task<sup>26</sup> so well—I long too for the *Garden*—I beg to recommend a note to you; last year a man at Turnham Green fixed up a board with this notice, *Ready made Temples sold here*. I would put over the Convocation, *Ready made priests sold here*.<sup>27</sup> The Turnhamite now sells only curries and whiskies.

If my gazette is long, remember you ordered me to amuse Mr Palgrave. I am glad you have him, and will do anything I can to fix him with you, pray assure him how much I am his. I can say no more, for I have not left half room to thank you for your very kind promise of coming to me in the spring. It amply compensates my disappointment of seeing you here; here I only get a snatch of you for an instant, nowhere I have enough of you. And which I lament more, for I am not selfish, the world has not enough of you—you know what I mean.

From MASON, ca Tuesday 30 January 1781

Missing.

of the English name' (*Decline and Fall* ii. 526–7), but their ancient savagery is also mentioned, and the total number of allusions to Scots or Scotland is negligible.

24. Hume is several times cited with respect (ii. 61, 360, and 531), and Adam Smith (1723–90), author of *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 1776, is described (ii. 418 n.) as 'a sage and a friend.' They seem to be 'legislators' only in that Gibbon cites them as authorities.

25. Alexander Wedderburn, cr. (14 June 1780) Bn Loughborough, was instrumental in getting Gibbon his appointment as a lord of Trade, July 1779 (D. M. Low, *Edward Gibbon*, 1937, p. 278).

26. Of writing notes for Mason's Fresnoy.

27. '20th [Nov. 1780] . . . The Address of the Convocation was uncommonly servile and ridiculous; they told the King they hoped he would find popery decreased (which was most improbable after so much encouragement), and that God had permitted us for our sins to be involved in a just and necessary war' (*Last Journals* ii. 337). For the text of the 'Address of the Archbishops, Bishops, and Clergy of the Province of Canterbury, in Convocation assembled, presented to his Majesty on the 17th of November 1780,' containing the declarations that HW has paraphrased, see GM 1780, I. 617.

## TO MASON, Saturday 3 February 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 144-6.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 3, 1781.

WITH Mr Palgrave's leave I will answer the essential parts of your letter before I attend to his entertainment, for which I am poorly qualified at present.

I have not Dr Johnson's *Lives*; I made a conscience of not buying them: however, having a mind to be possessed of these last volumes (I never even dipped into their predecessors) I inquired if I could buy the *Lives* separately from the edition of the poems; no, the whole are sixty volumes.<sup>1</sup> My purse made a conscience of laying out so much money for criticisms I despise, and for bodies of poetry that I never shall read again, and printed in so small a type that I could not read them if I would. I will try if I can borrow Gray's life for you, and will send it with Mr Conway's pamphlet, and will consult Mr Stonhewer.<sup>2</sup> I think you will not deem the dull comment on Gray worth your notice, if you do, pray do not forget Soame Jennyns's ode that is levelled at you both.<sup>3</sup>

You oblige me infinitely by your concern for Mr Conway; I left him better, or should not have left him, and had a still better account last night; yet this last shock on the neck of another has broken him exceedingly, and I doubt he will be long before he masters it. He is indeed far too virtuous for the times, yet they are such times that show such men! You will marvel to hear that on Thursday there was so large a minority as 149 on Ch. Fox's motion for censuring the preferment of Palisser,<sup>4</sup> but there were 214 that applauded it,<sup>5</sup> particu-

1. Although it was the original intention of the publishers to sell Johnson's *Prefaces* only with the poems for which they had been composed, a four-volume edition of *Lives of the Poets*, priced at one guinea, was published 16 June 1781 (R. W. Chapman and Allen T. Hazen, 'Johnsonian Bibliography: A Supplement to Courtney,' *Proceedings of the Oxford Bibliographical Society*, 1938, pp. 156 and 159).

2. On how to send the books to Mason.

3. See *ante* 19 May and 13 Oct. 1780.

4. On 1 Feb. 1781 Charles James Fox moved 'that the appointment of Sir Hugh Palliser to the government of Greenwich Hospital, who, by the sentence of a court-martial, is declared to have preferred a malicious and ill-founded accusation against his commander-in-chief, is a measure subversive of the discipline and derogatory to the honour of the British navy' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 1118).

5. *Ibid.* xxi. 1161.

larly Governor Johnston,<sup>6</sup> for with or without a *t* that is a detestable name, and a corrupt one; I would as soon be a Macgregor.<sup>7</sup>

The stocks believe that there is another rough rescript come from Russia, but though money is the only deity in vogue the greatest bigots do not mind their own oracle.

I have told you all I know, so little, that I fear Mr Palgrave would not stay five minutes if you have no better a correspondent; what can I do? oh! I will tell him a story.<sup>8</sup> It is true, mine are not so long as Schehezarade's, but if he is as easily amused as Shah Baham<sup>9</sup> of ever-hearing memory, I will answer as far as half a dozen go, to tell him as improbable tales as any in the Arabian Nights, or in the newspapers; yet the one I select is not of that kind, nor unluckily, new to you; but when great personages of old ordered their fools to divert their guests, I fear they were forced to hear the repetition of stale jokes—ay and I will warrant laughed heartily at them, again and again, as their successors might do now. Raspe's book goes on but slowly, I know not why; you shall have it the instant it is finished. It is not published by subscription. I am at the expense, and am to pay myself by the sale, if I can, which I doubt will not happen, for my own last volume of *Painters* does not go off.<sup>10</sup>

Mr Gilpin tells me, on my moving him to publish the charming book you showed me,<sup>11</sup> that he would try aquatinta if he could learn the secret; I shall consult Sandby<sup>12</sup>—nay, I believe it is no longer a secret.

Mr Warton's third volume is advertised for the end of this month,<sup>13</sup>

6. Johnstone's speech is reported *ibid.* xxi. 1130–9.

7. Mason's pseudonym; see *ante* ca May 1779, n. 6.

8. Since no story is told in this letter, HW may refer to a missing enclosure. It was probably one of his six *Hieroglyphic Tales*, which were not published until 1785. See Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 132.

9. A character in Crébillon's *Le Sopha*, said to be the grandson of Shahriyar, the monarch entertained by Scheherazade. The title-page of the *Hieroglyphic Tales* bears the inscription: "Schah Baham ne comprenait jamais bien que les chose absurdes et hors de toute vraisemblance." *Le Sopha*, p. 5.

10. See HW to Cole 30 Nov. 1780, *COLE* ii. 248.

11. Probably Gilpin's *Observations on Several Parts of England, Particularly the Mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Year 1772*, which was not published until 1786, and which may originally have included material that Gilpin subsequently published separately in one or another of his travel books. See Mason, *Mem. Gray* 376–7; W. D. Templeman, *The Life and Work of William Gilpin*, Urbana, 1939, p. 230; and *post* 29 March 1781.

12. See *ante* 15 July 1780.

13. 'Wed. Feb. 28 will be published the third volume of *The History of English Poetry . . .*' (*London Chronicle* 1–3 Feb. 1781, xlix. 119).

and Kate Macgraham<sup>14</sup> has published two more; yet does not advance beyond the death of Algernon Sidney. I believe England will be finished before her *History*.<sup>15</sup>

On Monday is to commence Lord George Gordon's trial,<sup>16</sup> which I suppose will obliterate Holland and Russia and everything else, even Vestris.<sup>17</sup> If I hear any circumstances worth telling you and not in the newspapers, you shall know them directly, but it is difficult to anticipate the daily chronicles. Adieu!

PS. Have you heard that your Archbishop went to the India House to vote for Benfield?<sup>18</sup> Don't tell me that there is no metempsychosis. I am sure Dr Markham was in Peru when the inhabitants were broiled to make them discover their gold, and held a crucifix in his hand.<sup>19</sup>

14. Catharine Macaulay had married (17 Dec. 1778) William Graham, brother of the Scottish quack, James Graham.

15. Vols vi and vii of *The History of England from the Accession of James I to the Revolution* were noticed in the *Critical Review* Feb. and March 1781, li. 124-31 and 169-78. The first volume appeared in 1763, the last (vol. viii) before 11 July 1783 (*London Chronicle* 10-12 July 1783, liv. 43). HW's copy (8 vols) was sold SH v. 51. That it was probably a presentation copy is suggested by the following letter (now wsl) from Kirgate to an unknown correspondent, dated from Strawberry Hill, 16 July 1783: 'Sir, Mr Horace Walpole will be obliged to you if you will inform him where Mrs Macaulay Graham lives.'

16. 'On Monday next comes on the trial of Lord George Gordon at Westminster Hall, touching the late tumults and outrages in the cities of London and Westminster' (*London Chronicle* 1-3 Feb. 1781, xlix. 120).

17. Gaetano Apollino Baldassare Vestris (1729-1808), Italian-born dancer who achieved fame at the Paris Opera. He and his son, Marie-Auguste Vestris (1760-1842), were at this time enjoying a highly successful engagement in London. See HW to Lady Ossory 17 Dec. 1780, to Mann 26 Feb. 1781, and *post* 30 March 1781.

18. Paul Benfield (ca 1740-1810), civil architect and engineer in the East India Company and member of the Council of Madras; M. P. Cricklade 1780-84, Malmes-

bury 1790-2, Shaftesbury 1793-1802. He amassed a considerable fortune in India by money-lending. His loans to the Nawab of Arcot had recently been the subject of inquiry by the directors of the Company in London. Benfield was acquitted of all charges of misconduct on 24 Jan. 1781 and permitted to return to India (*London Courant* 25 Jan. 1781). See James M. Holzman, *The Nabobs in England*, New York, 1926, p. 134. Archbishop Markham was a holder of East India stock (*ibid.* 119).

19. HW is thinking of Guatemoc (d. 1525), the Aztec emperor, whom the Spaniards 'laid . . . upon burning coals to extort a discovery of his wealth' (Edmund and William Burke, *An Account of the European Settlements in America*, 5th edn, 1770, i. 125). He has confused this story with that of Atahualpa (d. 1533), the last Inca of Peru, who was exhorted to become a Christian by a friar 'with a cross in his hand' before being captured by the Spaniards and his guards slaughtered (*ibid.* i. 137). There are similar accounts of Guatemoc and Atahualpa in William Robertson, *The History of America*, 1777, ii. 125-6, 184-5, and in the 'Advertisement' to Murphy's *Alzuma* (ante 27 March 1773), in which they are mentioned in the same paragraph. That the stories were fused in HW's mind is shown by his mention of 'Atabalipa's bed of roses' in a letter to Mary Berry 1 Oct. 1794 (BERRY ii. 120). It was Guatemoc who spoke thus of his tortures.

His Grace was going to take the oath with his beaver on; the clerk humbly remonstrated, and he took it off, which was surprising, for perhaps Cardinals swear covered; and when he supported Lord Pigot's deposer,<sup>20</sup> methinks his hat looked very red.

Lord Harcourt has just been here, and tells me he believes he can procure the method of the aquatinta for Mr Gilpin.

## TO MASON, Monday 5 February 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 147-9.

Monday noon, Feb. 5, 1781.

**P**ERHAPS you think, by my letters riding on the back of one another, that I am going to tell you of my Lord George Gordon; no, poor soul! he is at this minute in Westminster Hall, and I know nothing about him. Somehow or other I dare to say the constitution will be brought in guilty, for Lord Mansfield is the judge. But I have otherguess things to say to you: I have got your Fresnoy; it is a new proof of what I have long thought, that there is nothing you cannot do if you please. This is the best translation I ever saw; there have been disputes between literal and paraphrastic translations, and no wonder, for a third sort, the true, was not known; yours preserves the sense and substance of every sentence, but you make a new arrangement, and state and express the author's thought better than he could; Horace would have excused you if you had been simply familiar in a didactic poem, but you would not be so excused, nor allow yourself negligence in your poetry. You have exchanged the poverty of Fresnoy's Latin for Pope's rich English, and every epithet contributes its quota to every precept and develops it. This is in the style of none of your other works, and though more difficult, as masterly as any: in short, I have examined it with admiration, and only wonder how, with such powers and knowledge of the subject, you could confine yourself to the *matter* of the original. The shackles of translation have neither cramped your style nor rendered it obscure; you have enriched your author without deviating, and improved his

20. From the governorship of Madras; see *ante* 28 March 1777. Benfield was of the faction that opposed Pigot (Holzman, *op.*

*cit.* 12; *Cambridge History of India*, 1922-32, v. 280).

matter without adding to it, which is an achievement indeed:—I do not flatter you—nay, you know I am frank enough upon most occasions, and were I porter of the Temple of Fame, I would not open the door to one of your babes, if it was not like you.

I think I shall soon compass a transcript at least of Gray's life by Demogorgon<sup>1</sup> for you.<sup>2</sup> I saw him last night at Lady Lucan's,<sup>3</sup> who had assembled a *bluestocking* meeting in imitation of Mrs Vesey's Babels. It was so blue, it was quite mazarine-blue.<sup>4</sup> Mrs Montague kept aloof from Johnson, like the West from the East.<sup>5</sup> There were Soame Jenyns, Persian Jones, Mr Sherlocke,<sup>6</sup> the new Court wit Mr Courtney,<sup>7</sup> besides the out-pensioners of Parnassus; Mr Wraxhall<sup>8</sup> was not, I wonder why, and so will he, for he is popping into every spot where he can make himself talked of, by talking of himself; but I hear he will come to an untimely beginning in the House of Commons.

I shall return your Fresnoy as soon as I have gone through it once more, that Sir Joshua may go to work. I have proposed a subject to him that he seems to like: *little children brought to Christ*.<sup>9</sup> He will not make them all brothers, like Albano's Cupids.

Pray look into the [last] *Critical Review* but one, there you will find that David Hume in a saucy blockheadly note calls Locke, Algonon Sidney, and Bishop Hoadly, *despicable writers*.<sup>10</sup> I believe that

1. Johnson. 'Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name/Of Demogorgon' (*Paradise Lost* ii. 964-5).

2. See *post* 9 March 1781.

3. Margaret Smith (d. 1814), dau. and coheiress of James Smith, M.P., of Canons Leigh, Devon, and St Audries, Somerset; m. (1760) Sir Charles Bingham, 7th Bt, cr. (1776) Bn Lucan of Castlebar and (1795) E. of Lucan.

4. 'A deep rich blue' (OED). Lady Lucan was noted for her 'affectations and aristocratic airs' (GEC).

5. 'Dr. Johnson sent his *Life of Lord Lyttelton* in MS to Mrs Montagu, who was much dissatisfied with it, and thought her friend every way underrated; but the Doctor made no alteration. When he subsequently made one of a party at Mrs Montagu's, he addressed his hostess two or three times after dinner with a view to engage her in conversation: receiving only cold and brief answers, he said, in a low voice, to General Paoli, who sat next

him . . . "You see, Sir, I am no longer the man for Mrs Montagu"' (anecdote communicated to Croker by Mrs Rose, in *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, ed. G. B. Hill, 1897, ii. 421).

6. Rev. Martin Sherlock (ca 1750-97), Irish-born traveller and author; chaplain to Frederick Augustus Hervey, 4th E. of Bristol and Bp of Derry, 1777; surrogate of Killala and Achonry, 1781; vicar of Castlecomer and Kilglass, 1782; rector of Skreen, 1788; archdeacon of Killala, 1788. See HW to Lady Ossory 16 Nov. 1780; HW to Cole 15 Feb. 1782, COLE ii. 301 and n. 2.

7. John Courtenay had been returned to Parliament for Tamworth in the recent elections. See *post* 3 March 1781.

8. Nathaniel William Wraxall (1751-1831), cr. (1813) Bt; traveller and author of historical memoirs; M. P. Hindon 1780-4, Ludgershall 1784-90, Wallingford 1790-4.

9. Nothing seems to have come of HW's suggestion.

10. In a review of an anonymous pam-

ere long the Scotch will call the English *lousy*! and that Goody Hunter will broach the assertion in an anatomic lecture.<sup>11</sup> Not content with debasing and disgracing us as a nation by losing America, destroying our Empire, and making us the scorn and prey of Europe, the Scotch would annihilate our patriots, martyrs, heroes and geniuses. Algernon Sidney, Lord Russel, King William, the Duke of Marlborough, Locke, are to be traduced and levelled, and with the aid of their fellow-labourer Johnson, who spits at them while he tugs at the same oar, Milton, Addison, Prior, and Gray are to make way for the dull forgeries of Ossian, and such wights as Davy and Johnny Hume,<sup>12</sup> Lord Kaims,<sup>13</sup> Lord Monboddo,<sup>14</sup> and Adam Smith!—Oh! if you have a drop of English ink in your veins, rouse and revenge your country! Do not let us be run down and brazened out of all our virtue, genius, sense, and taste, by Laplanders and Bœotians, who never produced one original writer in verse or prose.

Tuesday morning.

My servants tell me, for I have yet seen nobody else today, that Lord George was acquitted at five this morning<sup>15</sup>—a wise manœuvre truly has been made; they punish him severely for eight months,<sup>16</sup> and cannot convict him! now he will be a confessor. I must finish

phlet entitled *Miscellaneous Observations on Some Points of the Controversy between the Materialists and Their Opponents* the following passage is quoted: 'And here I cannot easily suppress a remark or two suggested by a slight difference between the last edition and some former ones of Mr H[ume]'s *History of Great Britain*. At p. 373 of the eighth volume of this work (edit. 1778, 8vo) we read as follows: "Compositions the most despicable both for style and matter have been extolled, and propagated, and read . . . ;" in the last edition but one of Mr H.'s *History*, there was subjoined to this passage a note of reference in these words: "Such as Rapin Thoyras, etc.," which in the above quoted posthumous edition, with the author's last corrections and improvements, is enlarged into the following short and significant catalogue: "Such as Rapin Thoyras, Locke, Sidney, Hoadley, etc.'" (*Critical Review* Dec. 1780, l. 458).

11. See *ante* 1 Nov. 1780.

12. John Home, the author of *Douglas*; intimate friend of David Hume.

13. Henry Home (1696–1782), lord of session as Lord Kames, 1752; jurist and miscellaneous writer.

14. James Burnett (1714–99), lord of session as Lord Monboddo, 1767; jurist; author of *Ancient Metaphysics* and *Of the Origin and Progress of Language*, in which he developed a theory of men with tails. See Boswell, *Johnson* v. 45, 111, and Chauncey B. Tinker, *Nature's Simple Plan*, Princeton, 1922, pp. 7–25.

15. The jury began its deliberations at 5 A.M. on 6 Feb. and after 'an absence of near three-quarters of an hour' returned with the verdict of not guilty (*London Courant* 6 Feb. 1781).

16. Gordon was confined in the Tower from his arrest 9 June 1780 until his acquittal. For HW's further comments see *Last Journals* ii. 346.

for I have just heard that Lady Orford is dead,<sup>17</sup> and must write to my family and order mourning etc. I doubt this letter is no retaining fee to Mr Palgrave.

## TO MASON, Friday 9 February 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 150-1.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 9, 1781.

THE lost sheep is found; but I have more joy in one just person than in ninety and nine sinners that do not repent; in short, the renegade Gibbon is returned to me, after ten or eleven weeks, and pleads having been five of them at Bath. I immediately forgave even his return; yet pray do not imagine that I write to announce this recovery; no, it is to impart what he told me. He says that somebody asked Johnson if he was not afraid that *you* would resent the freedoms he has taken with Gray,—‘No, no Sir, Mr Mason does not like rough handling.’ I hope in the Muses that you will let him see which had most reason to fear rough handling. The saucy Caliban! I don’t know when I shall get you his blubber, but I have sent again to my bookseller about it.

I have restored your Fresnoy with regret. The more I have studied it the better I like it,—it will always be standard. I repeat that there is the precise sense of every sentence, and yet they are not translated. They are like the same pair of legs, before being taught to dance and afterwards. Fresnoy gives the precepts, and you tell him how to state and enounce them. As I have ambition of appertaining to your poem, I humbly beg leave to amend one word, in a certain line towards the end, for

Sons of her choice and *sharers* of her fire,

read ‘partners.’<sup>1</sup>

You will laugh, especially after my last letter, when I tell you that

17. Margaret Rolle (1709-81), *suo jure* Bns Clinton, 1760, who married (1) (1724) Robert Walpole, 2d E. of Orford, and (2) (1751) Hon. Sewallis Shirley (1709-65), died at Pisa 13 Jan. 1781. HW learned of her death from Mann’s letter of 16 Jan.

1. Mason retained ‘sharers’ (*The Art of Painting of Charles Alphonse Du Fresnoy, Translated into English Verse by William Mason, M.A., York, 1783, p. 58*).



I am chosen honorary member of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland.<sup>2</sup> I received the notification since I began this letter. Lord Buchan, the founder (under the patronage of Saint Bute)<sup>3</sup> was many years ago a little my acquaintance; I have not even seen him at least these dozen years, nor ever had any correspondence with him but once, about two years ago, when he wrote to ask me what portraits of Scottish kings or queens I knew of in England.<sup>4</sup> It is impossible to have less respect than I have for societies of antiquaries, who seldom do anything but grow antiquated themselves. However, as an honorary title exacts neither function nor *vote*, I have accepted it civilly, especially as it will show contempt for our own fools, from amongst whom I scratched out my name.<sup>5</sup> However I conceive that the bones of my memory may some time or other be dug up and burned at Edinburgh, as Peter Martyr's were at Oxford.<sup>6</sup>

My new dignity of F.S.A.S.<sup>7</sup> will not comport with amusing Mr Palgrave today. I have taken an oath on Ossian to have no imagination, no invention; for forgeries are *intentions*, not *inventions*. Still I shall not wear my new plaid robes and blue bonnet beyond my inauguration week, and shall soon relapse into a South Briton; though if I should say *The '15*, *The '45*, you will remember my connection north of the Tweed.

PS. Is not it droll that I, who never sought for, canvassed for, or received any mark of distinction in my days, should receive a compliment from Edinburgh?

2. HW had been elected 29 Jan. 1781 (*Archæologia Scotica; or Transactions of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1792, i. p. xxv). See HW to Buchan 10 Feb. 1781, DALRYMPLE 150-1.

3. The founder was David Steuart Erskine (1742-1829), 11th E. of Buchan, HW's correspondent. The general plan of the society was laid before a meeting of noblemen and gentlemen at Buchan's house in Edinburgh 14 Nov. 1780, and the formal institution took place 18 Dec. 1780. The Earl of Bute was elected president and Buchan first vice-president (William Smellie, 'An Historical Account of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland,' *Archæologia Scotica*, 1792, i. pp. v-vi).

4. Buchan's letter is missing, as are all the others he wrote to HW. See HW to

Buchan 24 Dec. 1778, DALRYMPLE 138-40. HW wrote to him 10 Feb. 1781 and occasionally thereafter until 1792.

5. HW was a member of the Society of Antiquaries of London from 1753 to 1772. See 'Short Notes,' GRAY i. 28 and 47.

6. Pietro Martire Vermigli (1500-62), known as Peter Martyr, Italian-born theologian and reformer, regius professor of divinity at Oxford 1548-54, was not buried at Oxford. HW is thinking of Vermigli's first wife, Catherine Dammartin of Metz (d. 1553), whose body, buried in the Cathedral at Oxford, was exhumed in 1557 with a view to burning it as that of a heretic. No evidence being obtained, the body was reinterred in 1558 (DNB *sub* Pietro Martire Vermigli).

7. Mitford reads 'F.S.S.S.'

## TO MASON, Monday 19 February 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 152-6.

Monday night, Feb. 19, 1781.

IT has not been from want of materials, if I had chosen to work them up, that I have not written to you very lately; but though I hold it delectable enough in one's dotage to prattle and gossip of the doings of the courts of one's younger days, I do not think it so decorous to invert one's Brantôme-hood<sup>1</sup> and limp after and repeat the tattle of drawing-rooms that are scarce fledged. A sovereign may be philosopher or concentrated enough in his own rays to disregard terrestrial tempests, and to be more occupied by the spots in his own orbit than by the mouldering away of his empire. For my part I have too much mortal clay about me to soar so much above matter, and to divert myself only with the music or discord of the spheres. All this tedious proem is but to say that I have not wanted news, ay, and news that employs this whole town, if I would have condescended to tell you who has or who has not been at Cumberland House,<sup>2</sup> or at the Queen's ball,<sup>3</sup> or how King George and his brother, Duke Henry, have quarrelled about the servants of the Prince of Wales not being suffered to dine with his Royal Highness Duke Henry,<sup>4</sup> and how Duke Henry was not invited to the ball at the Queen's house, with a deal of such skimble-skamble stuff,<sup>5</sup> which has totally obliterated the memory of all the wars that we have with all the world. Do not be surprised; if we attended to anything above such puerilities we should not be in

1. Pierre de Bourdeille (ca 1540-1614), Seigneur and Abbé de Brantôme, soldier and chronicler of scandal. HW's copy of his *Mémoires*, 1699, was sold SH iv. 38.

2. 'The Duke of Cumberland having had a general levee, the Duchess saw company once a week in an evening, and many persons both of the Court and Opposition went to her, but the Queen forbade her ladies going, and neither the Lord Chamberlain nor ministers went' (*Last Journals* ii. 347).

3. '16th [Feb. 1781]. The Queen gave a ball at her house to the Prince, to which one hundred persons of the Court, or in

favour, and their children, were invited' (*ibid.* ii. 348).

4. 'The Duke of Cumberland was making great court to the Prince of Wales, and intended to give him a ball; but the King would not let him go to that Duke and Duchess. The Duke of Cumberland then made a great dinner for the Prince's servants; but on the very morning the King forbade their going. The Duke complained to the Prince, and the Prince entreated the King to let them go, but he would not' (*ibid.* ii. 347).

5. 'And such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff' (*Henry IV*, pt i, III. i. 154).

the situation we are. I still do believe that distress will at last open our eyes, but I believe too, that we shall soon shut them again. There is not energy enough left in us to produce any effect. One may judge from the *nature* of our dissipations as much as from the dissipation itself. The age that souses into every amusement and folly that is presented to it, has not imagination enough to strike out anything of itself. Mrs Cornelys, Almack and Dr Graham<sup>6</sup> are forced to advertise diversions by public sale, and everybody goes indolently and mechanically to them all, without choice or preference. They who are called *the people of fashion* or *the ton* have contributed nothing of their own but *being too late*; nay, actually do go to most public diversions after they are over. Your Yorkshire reformers, though not content with Mr Burke's bill,<sup>7</sup> will gather no prophetic comfort from the treatment it received today. I was at Mrs Delany's this evening, when Mr Frederic Montagu arrived from the House. They had put off the second reading till Friday, because Wednesday is the Fast day, and Thursday Vestris's benefit.<sup>8</sup> God has his day, a French dancer his, and then the national senate will be at leisure to think whether it will save three-halfpence-farthing out of eighteen millions that are to be raised in hopes of protracting the war, till we want at least eighteen millions more.

Was not you edified with the last *Gazette*? when we expected to hear that all Washington's army was caught in a drag-net, and that Lord Cornwallis had subdued and pacified all Virginia and Carolina, we were modestly told that his Lordship and his handful of men had been sick, but thank you are a little better;<sup>9</sup> and that Colonel Fergus-

6. James Graham (ca 1745-94), quack doctor who presided over an elaborately decorated 'Temple of Health' on the Royal Terrace, Adelphi. See HW to Lady Ossory 23 Aug. 1780.

7. The bill for regulating civil list establishments, which had been defeated 23 June 1780, and which on 15 Feb. 1781 Burke had been given leave to re-introduce (*ante* 22 March 1780 and n. 3; Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 714, 1240-1). It was read for the first time on Monday 19 Feb. Because the bill did not urge annual Parliaments and an increase in the number of members of Parliament, HW assumed that

it would not fully satisfy the Yorkshire Association.

8. 'It was [delayed] . . . because Thursday was the benefit day of Mr Vestris, the French dancer. . . . It would be shameful to think of their constituents, or to think of their country, when Vestris was to dance' (Burke's speech 19 Feb., *ibid.* xxi. 1243).

9. An extract of a letter from Lord Cornwallis to Sir Henry Clinton, dated 3 Dec. 1780, printed in the *London Gazette* 17 Feb. 1781, mentions the illness of Cornwallis's troops. Another letter printed in the same *Gazette*, from the commandant

son was beaten,<sup>10</sup> and Colonel Tarleton<sup>11</sup> had had a puny advantage;<sup>12</sup> all which we knew two months ago.<sup>13</sup>

Today we are very sorry for what however we do not care a straw about. Well the Grand Fleet, that was to fetch home Gibraltar and place it out of harm's way in the Isle of Sky,<sup>14</sup> cannot sail. Governor Johnstone, the honestest man in the world, has written to Lord Hillsborough (for he would not trust Lord Sandwich whom a fortnight ago he thought the second man in honesty in *south* Britain<sup>15</sup>) complaining that the fleet is rotten, and cannot sail,<sup>16</sup> nay he has sent up a yard and half of worm-eaten plank which he humbly begs his Majesty himself will taste and be convinced. I do not answer for a syllable of truth in this narrative, though it was told me by a Scottish Earl<sup>17</sup> who never gave a vote in his days against any court.

I have not yet been able to get you Gray's life.<sup>18</sup> My bookseller had blundered, and after trusting to him so long, he brought me the preceding volumes: but I am on a new scent, and hope at least to send you a transcript of that single life; though I wish you to see the whole set, nay, those old ones; I dipped into them, and found that

at Charleston, dated 16 Jan. 1781, reported that Cornwallis's men were 'in the highest health.'

10. Patrick Ferguson (1744-80), Major, 1779, brevet Lt-Col., 1780, commanded the British troops at the battle of King's Mountain 9 Oct. 1780. The Americans defeated the British and Ferguson was killed, though his death was not mentioned in the *Gazette*.

11. Banastre Tarleton (1754-1833), cr. (1815) Bt; G.C.B., 1820; Lt-Col. in America, 1778; brevet Major, 1779; Lt-Col., 1781; Col., 1790; Maj.-Gen., 1794; Lt-Gen., 1801; Gen., 1812; M. P. Liverpool 1790-1806, 1807-12; the subject of one of Reynolds's best-known portraits (see Algernon Graves and W. V. Cronin, *A History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1899-1901, iii. 952-3).

12. The *Gazette* contained an account of Tarleton's victory at Blackstock Hill, North Carolina, 20 Nov. 1780.

13. The illness of Cornwallis's troops and the defeat of Ferguson at King's Mountain were known in Dec. 1780. See *ante* 4 Jan. 1781 and *Last Journals* ii. 341.

14. 'The first task set for the fleet in 1781

was to carry supplies to relieve the garrisons of Gibraltar, now well into the second year of its long defence . . . , and Minorca' (*Sandwich Papers* iv. 4).

15. HW here presumably is thinking of Johnstone's defence of Palliser, whom Sandwich had continually championed, on 1 Feb. See *ante* 3 Feb. 1781.

16. Speaking in the House 19 Feb., Charles James Fox 'added that he had heard that Governor Johnstone had sent from Portsmouth, whither he was gone to sail with the grand fleet for the relief of Gibraltar, a complaint to Lord Hillsborough that the fleet was in a rotten condition and not fit to sail' (*Last Journals* ii. 348; cf. *London Courant* 21 Feb. 1781). Rumours of Johnstone's being in command of the relief of Gibraltar were unfounded. The fleet actually sailed, under Adm. George Darby, in March, and accomplished its mission. See *post* 30 March and 6 May 1781.

17. Probably Lord Abercorn, who was apparently the only Earl among the sixteen Scottish representative peers with whom HW was acquainted.

18. I.e., Johnson's life of Gray.

the tasteless pedant admires that wretched buffoon Dr King,<sup>19</sup> who is but a Tom Brown in rhyme;<sup>20</sup> and says that *The Dispensary*, that *chef-d'œuvre*, can scarce make itself read.<sup>21</sup> This is prejudice on both sides, equal to that monkish railer Père Garasse.<sup>22</sup> But Dr Johnson has indubitably neither taste nor ear, criterion of judgment, but his old woman's prejudices; where they are wanting, he has no rule at all; he prefers Smith's poetic, but insipid and undramatic *Phædra* and *Hippolitus* to Racine's *Phèdre*,<sup>23</sup> the finest tragedy in my opinion of the French theatre, for with Voltaire's leave, I think it infinitely preferable to *Iphigénie*<sup>24</sup> and so I own I do *Britannicus*, *Mahomet*, *Alzire*, and some others; but I will allow Johnson to dislike Gray, Garth, Prior, ay and every genius we have had, when he cries up Blackmore, Thompson, Akenside and Dr King; nay, I am glad that the measure of our dulness is full. I would have this era stigmatize itself in every respect, and be a proverb to the nations around, and to future ages. We want but popery to sanctify every act of blindness. Hume should burn the works of Locke, and Johnson of Milton, and the atheist and the bigot join in the same religious rites, as they both were pensioned by the same piety. Oh! let us not have a ray of sense or throb of sensation left to distinguish us from brutes! let total stupefaction palliate our fall, and let us resemble the Jews, who when they were to elect a god, preferred a calf!

19. William King (1663-1712), miscellaneous writer; D.C.L., Oxford, 1692. Johnson can scarcely be said to have been excessive in his admiration of King. He describes his poems as 'rather the amusements of idleness than efforts of study,' and concludes his *Life*: 'His purpose is to be merry; but perhaps, to enjoy his mirth, it may be sometimes necessary to think well of his opinions' (*Lives of the English Poets*, ed. G. B. Hill, Oxford, 1905, ii. 31). HW's remark probably reflects his resentment of Johnson's observation that King's 'eyes were open to all the operations of Whiggism' (*ibid.* ii. 29-30).

20. Thomas Brown (1663-1704), satirist and author of humorous sketches of London low life. He wrote verse as well as prose.

21. *The Dispensary* 'appears, however, to want something of poetical ardour, and something of general delectation; and therefore, since it has been no longer sup-

ported by accidental and extrinsic popularity, it has been scarcely able to support itself' (*Lives of the English Poets* ii. 64).

22. François Garasse (1585-1631), Jesuit preacher and polemicist, noted for the violence of his style. It is 'surtout ses ouvrages de polémique qui lui ont fait la triste célébrité qu'il conserve encore de nos jours, et qui ont donné à son nom la valeur d'une épithète injurieuse' (NKG).

23. HW has lost sight of the fact that the 'character' of Edmund Smith (1672-1710) containing praise of his *Phædra* and *Hippolitus* was by William Oldisworth. Johnson transcribed it and then rather depreciated it, although concluding that there was little in it that could be contradicted (*Lives of the English Poets*, ed. Hill, ii. 7-8, 11).

24. Voltaire considered Racine's *Iphigénie* and *Athalie* the two tragedies that came closest to perfection (*Œuvres*, ed. Mo-land, vii. 333, 486; xxv. 225).

Tuesday.

Upon stricter inquiry I find that Johnson has not yet published his new *Lives*, but only given away a few copies.

An account is said to be come from New York that above two thousand of Washington's army have left him for want of pay, but remain encamped at some distance; have refused to join Clinton and have sent to the Congress that they will return to Washington if they are paid, if not that they will not disband.<sup>25</sup> Governor Johnstone's remonstrance is already whittled down to a complaint of one particular ship not being ready.

2nd PS. Lord Harcourt has got me from Taylor<sup>26</sup> at Bath the method of the aquatinta, which I have sent to Mr Stonhewer this morning to transmit to him.<sup>27</sup>

From MASON, Wednesday 28 February 1781

Printed from MS now wSL.

...Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WORKSOP 2 MR.

Aston, Feb. 28th, 1781.

AT the last day of the month I should be ungrateful beyond measure if I did not return you my best and sincerest thanks for four delightful letters which in the course of it amused me even in its bleakest and most tempestuous moments. Was Palgrave here (but he left me three days ago) he would join his thanks with mine in the greatest cordiality. He is an excellent creature, has infinite original humour and what is better a good heart.

Mr Conway's speech suits my political ideas very much as well as

25. '20th [Feb. 1781]. Letters from New York that 1300 Pennsylvanians had quitted Washington for want of pay, and had encamped at Trenton. Clinton had sent two messengers to invite them to join him; but they had refused, and sent his messengers prisoners to the Congress, but declared they would not disband till paid' (*Last Journals* ii. 348). The story of the mutiny, which broke out 1 Jan. 1781, was printed in the *London Gazette* 20 Feb.

1781. The demands of the troops were met by Congress, but the soldiers who had completed the terms of service for which they had volunteered accepted discharges and returned home (*London Courant* 21 Feb. 1781; John C. Miller, *Triumph of Freedom 1775-1783*, Boston, 1948, pp. 542-5).

26. Probably John Taylor (ca 1745-1806), of Bath, landscape-painter and etcher.

27. Gilpin. See *ante* 3 Feb. 1781.

my *ecclesiastical*; his stricture on a certain bench<sup>1</sup> is highly to my taste, I can assure you, and I admire him the more for having spoken out on the occasion.

The tale (as you remember) I had seen before and had told you how much I liked it.<sup>2</sup> I can only say that Palgrave was equally entertained with it.

I am sorry you have had so much trouble about Dr Johnson's hypercriticisms. 'Tis true I should like to see them, but I can wait with much patience. I am rather more desirous of picking up a few *authentic* anecdotes of Mrs M[ontagu]'s quarrel with him and whether it has proceeded to an absolute breach. A less matter than this seems to be has heretofore given rise to a mock epic, but I need say no more, I dare say your imagination can throw it into cantos.

I ought to thank you for your favourable (I fear too favourable) opinion of my translation of Fresnoy. 'Twas a work begun in early youth and which crept on at very distant and idle intervals. It was near being published twenty years ago, but Mr Gray and Dr Hurd thought a translation of such a poem would do me little credit. Yet now when I resolved upon it for the sake of inducing Sir Joshua to comment upon it, I will own I revised it so very carefully, that I do not think there are ten lines in the whole that are precisely the same they were when my two critics saw it. And as by practice the knack of rhyming is much more my own, so I really do hope in point of versification (considered as a translation) it will pass muster. I cannot, however, think it has much original ease about it.

I have heard lately from Mr Gilpin, who seems much flattered by your good opinion of him<sup>3</sup>—but the post is come and will not wait even to give me time to sign and seal and say how much I am

Yours,

W.M.

1. The bench of bishops. 'Even the more sacred function, and the highest orders of it, caught the frenzy too, and joined with the deluded people in this *dance of death*. . . . In their dioceses I revere them; I would treat them everywhere with respect; but politics are not their trade, and don't do them honour: they are a shining body of the nation undoubtedly . . . but in the present times, I doubt, are a faulty, if not

a rotten part of the constitution' (*The Speech of General Conway*, 1781, pp. 11–13).

2. See *ante* 3 Feb. 1781. Mason presumably had seen the tale on one of his visits to SH.

3. 'Mr Walpole has honoured them [Gilpin's books] much more than I could have expected' (Gilpin to Mrs Delany 14 Jan. 1782, *Delany Correspondence* vi. 79).

## TO MASON, Saturday 3 March 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 158-61.

Berkeley Square, March 3, 1781.

I BEGAN to be a little out of humour at your silence; your letter came in time just as I was going to seal up my lips too. An echo that will repeat one word twenty times will stop, unless you feed it anew, though but with a single word. This time, no more than the echo, had I any need to lift up my voice. The war is gone to sleep, the Parliament gone to bed,<sup>1</sup> and Vestris himself if he had any competitor would go out of fashion. Invention except of political lies is not the gift of this age. For want of subject of admiration, Sir Joseph York is called by the newspapers a great man,<sup>2</sup> and for want of taste the Monthly Reviewers call Mr Haley a great poet,<sup>3</sup> though he has no more ear or imagination than they have. As if anybody loved reading or did read, Mr Gibbon has treated them with his vast two volumes.<sup>4</sup> I have almost finished the last and some parts are more entertaining than the other and yet it has tired me, and so I think it did himself. There is no spirit in it, nor does any one chapter interest one more than another; which is commonly the case of compilations, especially in such an eloquent age as this. Though these volumes are not polished like the first, you see that he is never thinking of his subject, but intending to make his periods worthy of himself. Then he is often obscure, for from the prodigious quantity of matter he frequently is content with alluding to his original, and who for mercy would recur to Sozomen, Jornandez and Procopius?<sup>5</sup> Then having

1. That is, it was in adjournment from Friday to Monday.

2. HW is probably thinking of the laudatory sketch of Sir Joseph Yorke by Martin Sherlock published in *Lloyd's Evening Post* 28 Feb.-2 March 1781 (xlvi. 212): 'All great men have many persons who are envious of them; Sir Joseph Yorke ought to have more than any one else; but his is the only character in Europe against which I have not heard a single word.' Sir Joseph Yorke (1724-92), K.B., 1761, cr. (1788) Bn Dover, was minister plenipotentiary to The Hague 1751-61, and ambassador 1761-80. The war with Holland

had recently brought him to England. See *post* 9 March 1781.

3. A laudatory account of William Hayley's *Ode Inscribed to John Howard . . . Author of 'The State of English and Foreign Prisons'*, 1780, appeared in the *Monthly Review* Feb. 1781, lxiv. 102-5. The reviewer was Edmund Cartwright (B. C. Nangle, *The Monthly Review . . . Indexes*, Oxford, 1934, pp. 8, 168).

4. Vols ii and iii of the *Decline and Fall*, published 1 March 1781. See *ante* 27 Jan. 1781, n. 15.

5. Authorities frequently cited by Gibbon. Sozomen was Hermias Sozomenus Sa-



both the Eastern and Western Empires on his hands at once, and nobody but *imbecilles* and their eunuchs at the head, one is confused with two subjects, that are quite alike, though quite distinct, and in the midst of this distraction enters a deluge of Alans, Huns, Goths, Ostrogoths and Visigoths, who with the same features and characters are to be described in different terms, without any essential variety, and he is to bring you acquainted with them when you wish them all at the bottom of the Red Sea. He has made me a present of these volumes and I am sure I shall have fully paid for them when I have finished them; one paragraph I must select which I believe the author did not intend should be so applicable to the present moment. 'The Armorican provinces of Gaul and the greatest part of Spain were thrown into a state of disorderly independence by the confederations of the Bagaudæ; and the imperial ministers pursued with proscriptive laws and ineffectual arms the rebels whom they had made.' End of Chap. xxxv.<sup>6</sup> This is also a sample of the style which is translating bad Latin into English, that may be turned into classic Latin. I was charmed as I owned with the enamel of the first volume,<sup>7</sup> but I am tired by this rhetoric diction and wish again for Bishop Burnet's *And so*. They who write of their own times love or hate the actors and draw you to their party, but with the fear of the *laws* of history before his eyes, a compiler affects you no more than a chancery suit about the entail of an estate with whose owners you was not acquainted. Poor Lord Lyttelton was of all that tribe the most circumspect and consequently the most insipid. His *Henry II* raises no more passions than Burne's *Justice of Peace*.<sup>8</sup> Apropos, *poor Lyttelton* were the words of offence.<sup>9</sup> Mrs Vesey sounded the trumpet. It has not I

lamenes (fl. 400–50), Palestinian historian who wrote, in Greek, an *Ecclesiastical History* of the period 323–439, part of which is lost; Jornandes (according to the oldest and best MSS, Jordanes) (fl. 550) compiled the *De Getarum sive Gothorum origine et rebus gestis*, an abridgment of a lost work by Cassiodorus; Procopius (d. ca 565) was a Byzantine Greek historian who has left accounts of the contemporary wars.

6. *Decline and Fall*, 1776–88, iii. 434.

7. See *ante* 18 Feb. 1776 and n. 15.

8. Burn's *The Justice of the Peace and Parish Officer*, a useful and frequently reprinted work, first published in 1755. The author was Richard Burn (1709–85),

D.C.L., Oxford, 1762; vicar of Orton, Westmorland 1736–85; chancellor of the diocese of Carlisle 1765–85.

9. To Mrs Montagu, in her quarrel with Johnson (*ante* 27 Jan. 1781). 'About this time Lyttelton published his *Dialogues of the Dead*, which were very eagerly read; though the production rather, as it seems, of leisure than of study, rather effusions than compositions. . . . When they were first published they were kindly commended by the *Critical Reviewers*; and poor Lyttelton, with humble gratitude, returned his acknowledgments in a note which I have read; acknowledgments either for flattery or justice' (Johnson,

believe produced any altercation, but at a bluestocking meeting held by Lady Lucan, Mrs Montagu and Dr Johnson kept at different ends of the chamber and set up altar against altar there.<sup>10</sup> There she told me as a mark of her high displeasure that she would never ask him to dinner again.<sup>11</sup> I took her side and fomented the quarrel, and wished I could have made Dagon and Ashtaroth<sup>12</sup> scold in Coptic.

I am happy that you like Mr Conway's speech, and the *concio ad clerum*.<sup>13</sup> The Duke of Grafton with whom I dined the other day with Mr Conway and Stonhewer, told us that the flamen most offended is Bishop Keene. I do believe he is one of the most sore, for he is one of the most putrid, but he must be ten times more angry at his own son, who spoke on Monday for Burke's bill.<sup>14</sup> Lord Chatham's second son, they say was far more like *his* father.<sup>15</sup> Sheridan demolished Courtney<sup>16</sup> who, old George Cavendish<sup>17</sup> said well, is deputy buffoon to Lord North.

*Prefaces [Lives] x, 'Life of Lyttelton,' pp. 11-12.* Johnson's remark is made clearer in subsequent editions of the *Lives of the Poets*: '... acknowledgments which can never be proper, since they must be paid either for flattery or for justice'. The course of the quarrel may be followed in *Lives*, ed. G. B. Hill, Oxford, 1905, iii. 452; Boswell, *Johnson* iv. 64-5 and notes bearing upon 'the feeble though shrill outcry' raised against Johnson; *Thraliana*, ed. Katharine C. Balderston, Oxford, 1942, ii. 622; *Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay*, ed. Charlotte Barrett and Austin Dobson, 1904-5, i. 497-8. An extended account is given in *Mrs Montagu, 'Queen of the Blues,'* ed. Reginald Blunt, [1923], ii. 156-66, and also in C. B. Tinker, *The Salon and English Letters*, New York, 1915, pp. 199-202.

10. HW had already told Mason this story (*ante* 5 Feb. 1781).

11. A partial reconciliation was effected in the autumn of 1783 (*The Letters of Samuel Johnson*, ed. R. W. Chapman, Oxford, 1952, iii. 73-4 and 82), and after Johnson's death Mrs Montagu wrote, 20 Dec. 1784, 'I hear he died with great piety and resignation; and indeed he had many virtues, and perhaps ill health and narrow circumstances gave him a peevish censorious turn' (Blunt, *op. cit.* ii. 165).

12. Dagon was god of the Philistines, and Ashtaroth goddess of the Zidonians.

13. Discourse to the clergy; i.e., Conway's 'stricture' on the bishops.

14. 'For the better regulation of his Majesty's civil establishments and of certain public offices': see *ante* 19 Feb. 1781. It was debated in the House of Commons 26 Feb. 1781, and defeated (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 1244-92). If Benjamin Keene (1753-1837), M.P. Cambridge 1776-84, spoke for the bill, his speech has not been reported.

15. William Pitt (1759-1806) the younger, prime minister 1783-1801, 1804-6, entered Parliament for Appleby 23 Jan. 1781 and made his maiden speech 26 Feb., supporting Burke's bill. 'The Honourable William Pitt . . . now rose for the first time, and . . . displayed great and astonishing powers of eloquence. His voice is rich and striking, full of melody and force; his manner easy and elegant; his language beautiful and luxuriant. He gave in this first essay a specimen of eloquence not unworthy the son of his immortal parent' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 1261).

16. 'Sheridan demolished Courtney, the wit, or rather buffoon, of the Court, whom he told that he was most ludicrous when he attempted to be serious' (*Last Journals* ii. 349). Courtenay's speech that provoked Sheridan's attack is printed in Cobbett xxi. 1277-83, and Sheridan's remarks, concluding with the one that HW paraphrases, in *ibid.* 1290-1.

I am sorry you have lost Palgrave, and wish you could tempt him to meet you at Strawberry Hill.

Sir Joshua I doubt, will not have time soon to expedite your Fresnoy; it must be much altered, or I should marvel at Gray; for Bishop Hurd you know I never admired him, even before he was mitred. All his writings are tame, without a grain of originality. I shall always maintain that you have made a masterly poem from a very moderate one, without adding to the author's sense. If that is not the perfection of translation, I do not know what is. I am very sensible that you could have added more gold, but who ever gilt so well? This I take to be the precise definition of a good translation, which improves base metal without adding ore. Adieu.

### TO MASON, Friday 9 March 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 161-3.

March 9, 1781.

I HAVE at last got for you Johnson's criticism on Gray; there is not the introductory life, but this is all I have, and very oddly, Mr Bentley sent it to me in manuscript,<sup>1</sup> from indignation as he is a true admirer of Gray; and he tells me that he received it from a correspondent at Oxford, who adds, that it is to appear in two months *to the making all Oxford too happy*.<sup>2</sup> I send you this genuine expression, and I trust you will not forget the feature; you will find ample matter for satire and ridicule, besides the hints I have given you already from his other lives. I depend on your asserting your indisputable right to succession, by vindicating your lawful predecessors.<sup>3</sup>

To my great joy, I have done with the Goths and Huns and Visigoths;<sup>4</sup> you will not read of them, but pray when you have an opportunity, turn to the very last page of the last volume, and to the

17. Lord George Augustus Cavendish (ca 1727-94), elder brother of Lord John Cavendish; M.P. Weymouth 1751-4, Derbyshire 1754-80, 1781-94; controller of the Household, 1761; Lord-Lieutenant of Derbyshire 1766-94; called 'old George Cavendish' by HW to distinguish him from his nephew, Lord George Augustus Henry Cavendish (1754-1834), cr. (1831)

E. of Burlington. See Venn, *Alumni Cantab.*

1. In his letter of 7 March 1781.

2. Bentley's letter concludes, 'Such is University rivalry.'

3. 'Gray, Garth, Prior . . . and every genius we have had' (*ante* 19 Feb. 1781).

4. The second and third volumes of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*.

very conclusion;<sup>5</sup> it will be worth your while. I am now embarked in another almost as tedious a navigation, Mr Warton's third volume.<sup>6</sup> This is the third immense history of the life of poetry, and still poetry is not yet born, for Spenser will not appear till the fourth tome.<sup>7</sup> I perceive it is the certain fate of an antiquary, to become an old fool. Mr Warton thinks Prior spoiled his original in his imitation of 'Henry and Emma.'<sup>8</sup> Mercy on us, what shall we come to in these halcyon days! *O for some gentle James*,<sup>9</sup> etc. Last week the stocks pricked up their ass's ears six inches higher. Austria and Russia were to make peace for us. France and Spain had accepted the Imperial mediations, and the great Sir Joseph<sup>10</sup> drew on his boots and was galloping over sea to Vienna; Sir Joseph's boots are still on, but France they say has said nothing, and Spain has said no, and we, I believe, protest against the independence of America,<sup>11</sup> which we

5. The last footnote in the third volume reads, 'The merit of discovery has too often been stained with avarice, cruelty, and fanaticism; and the intercourse of nations has produced the communication of disease and prejudice. A singular exception is due to the virtue of our own times and country. The five great voyages successively undertaken by the command of his present Majesty, were inspired by the pure and generous love of science and of mankind. The same prince, adapting his benefactions to the different stages of society, has founded a school of painting in his capital; and has introduced into the islands of the South Sea, the vegetables and animals most useful to human life.'

6. Of *The History of English Poetry*, published on or about 28 Feb. 1781 (*ante* 3 Feb. 1781, n. 13).

7. Which was never published.

8. Prior's 'Henry and Emma,' first printed in *Poems on Several Occasions*, 1709, was a paraphrase of the ballad of 'The Nut-Brown Maid.' Warton wrote of the modern version: 'Prior has misconceived and essentially marred his poet's design' (*History of English Poetry*, 1774-81, iii. 140-1).

9. 'O (cried the Goddess) for some pedant reign!

Some gentle James, to bless the land again'

(Pope, *Dunciad* iv. 175-6, alluding to James I).

10. Yorke (*ante* 3 March 1781).

11. '2nd [March 1781]. It was given out by the runners of the Court that the Emperor and the Czarina had offered to mediate a general peace, and that we, France, and Spain had accepted the mediation, though the treaty was to be negotiated at Vienna; and that Sir Joseph Yorke, who was just arrived from Holland, was to be joined with Keith, our minister at Vienna, and was to set out without delay. . . . The stocks rose six per cent in two days on this intelligence, but soon fell again, as it appeared to be at least a very exaggerated account given out to raise them. The two Imperial powers [Austria and Russia], it was said, had indeed made a defensive alliance, as if to enforce peace, and had offered us their mediation, but it did not appear that either France or Spain had accepted it; and if we had, yet the conversation of the Court discovered how little foundation there was for hoping peace would be made, as the courtiers declared there must be no mention made of the independence of America; and Sir Joseph Yorke's journey was at least delayed' (*Last Journals* ii. 355). HW here gives a reasonably well informed account of the abortive negotiations. The Russo-Austrian efforts at mediation and their ultimate failure are discussed by Samuel F. Bemis in *The Hussey-Cumberland Mission and American Independence*, Princeton, 1931, pp. 116-27.

can very well afford, for we have funded only twenty-one millions to borrow twelve;<sup>12</sup> for my part, I wish for peace, and I do not care how bad an one; our glory is gone, our constitution gone, our sense gone, but I would save the lives that are left, and then Mr Gibbon and the University of Oxford may hunt for and find what topics of panegyric they please. Adieu! I must send away my packet to Mr S[tonhewer] and desire him to find a conveyance for it.

From MASON, Thursday 29 March 1781

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WORKSOP 31 MR.

Aston, March 29th, '81.

Dear Sir,

MY laziness makes me put off writing to everybody, till it becomes necessary to make an apology, and laziness hates apologizing so much that then she becomes infinitely more strong in her powers of procrastination. I will however as the Psalmist says 'break her bonds asunder and cast away her cords from me.'<sup>1</sup> I will thank you again and again for your two letters<sup>2</sup> without saying more than I have said for not having answered them. I will thank you, nay my laziness shall thank you too, for saving us the trouble of reading Mr Gibbon, and for doing your best to save us from reading T. Warton, but in this latter author's antiquarian mind we are already above knee deep, and we must on as fast as we are able. There was somebody, I think it was D'Alembert, that out of two thick quartos of German, made a hundred duodecimo pages about Queen Christina<sup>3</sup> which were the prettiest and pleasantest reading in the

12. '7th [March]. Lord North opened the budget and declared he should fund twenty-one millions to borrow twelve' (*Last Journals* ii. 355; cf. Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 1328). W. Baring Pemberton remarks that North 'had done as well as any man could have done under the prevailing conditions in the money market' (*Lord North*, 1938, p. 327).

1. 'Let us break their bonds asunder: and cast away their cords from us' (Psalm 2.3).

2. Of 3 and 9 March 1781.

3. Christina (1626-89), Queen of Sweden 1644-54. D'Alembert's *Mémoires et réflexions sur Christine, reine de Suède* was first published in his *Mélanges de littérature, d'histoire, et de philosophie*,

world. I trust that posterity (if posterity deserves it) will be blessed with some future *Anecdotist* like one I could name (who has proved contrary to his own *ipse dixit* 'that a man may be an antiquarian without becoming an old fool') that will select out of these three quartos, *Anecdotes of English Poetry* in two or three small octavos about the size, for instance, of the *Royal and Noble Authors*, and should this be the case our Oxonian will not have written in vain. Nevertheless, let us do him justice, where he writes on a good subject few write better, and what he has said of Lord Surrey<sup>4</sup> is quite what it should be. The mischief is that he thinks all subjects equally good, and those best that are oldest.

And now let me thank you for your transcript of Johnson, which is certainly the meanest business that ever disgraced literature. He shall certainly have his reward, when my *E[nglish] Garden* (the fourth book of which is now in the York Press) is out of my hands.<sup>5</sup> I do not think I could do it any way better, than by what I more than half did three years ago in a certain monologue of which you saw the greatest part, but then it would certainly tell tales.<sup>6</sup> I have a great

1753. It is an abridgment of the first two volumes of the *Mémoires concernant Christine, reine de Suède*, Amsterdam and Leipzig, 1751-60, by the Swedish writer, Johan Arckenholtz (1695-1777). Arckenholtz's *Mémoires* were translated into German, but there is no reason to believe that D'Alembert worked from anything but the French version. Mason was perhaps misled by D'Alembert's statement that his source was two large volumes recently published in Holland (*Mélanges de littérature*, new edn, Amsterdam, 1768-72, ii. 228). In this edition the abridgment fills 69 duodecimo pages.

4. Section xix of *The History of English Poetry*, 1774-81, iii. 1-27.

5. The fourth book of *The English Garden*, published by Ann Ward of York, appeared 1 Sept. 1781 (*post* 9 Sept. 1781; Gaskell 25).

6. Mason seems to be referring cryptically (since this letter went by post) to the 'Attorney-General's speech' in his unfinished 'Epistle to the Honourable Horace Walpole' (*ante* ca 22 and 25 Aug. 1778). Johnson is casually mentioned in it, and again in a continuation that HW may not have seen (*post* Appendix 5).

By 'telling tales' Mason doubtless means that his authorship might be guessed from the fact that it is addressed to HW. Mason apparently did not proceed with his plan. Johnson is ridiculed in his *Archæological Epistle* (1782), but again only incidentally. His chief attack on Johnson (which provoked a sharp reply from Boswell in *Life* i. 31) occurs at the close of his memoirs of Whitehead: 'Those readers who . . . may have gathered, from what they have already read, that I am not so passionately enamoured of Dr Johnson's biographical manner as to take that for my model, have only to throw these pages aside, and wait till they are new-written by some one of his numerous disciples, who may follow his master's example; and should more anecdote than I furnish him with be wanting (as was the Doctor's case in his life of Mr Gray), may make amends for it by those acid eructations of vituperative criticism, which are generated by unconcocted taste and intellectual indigestion' (*Poems by William Whitehead* . . . Vol. III. *To which are Prefixed Memoirs of His Life and Writings*, by W. Mason, 1788, p. 129).

Dear Sir

Aston March 29<sup>th</sup> - 81

My Laziness makes me put off writing to every body, till it becomes necessary to make an apology, and Laziness hates apologizing so much that, <sup>then</sup> she becomes infinitely more strong in her power of procrastination. I will however as the Psalmist says "break her Bonds, a bundle & cast away her cords from me". I will thank you again & again for your two letters without saying more than I have said for not having answered them. I will thank you, may my Laziness shall thank you too, for saving us the trouble of reading Mr Gibbon, & for doing your best to save us from reading J Warton. but in this latter authors antiquarian mind we are already above here. Beep, & we must on as fast as we are able. There was somebody, I think it was D Alembert, that out of two thick Quartos of German, made a hundred Duodecimo pages about Queen Christina which were the prettiest & pleasantest reading in the world. I trust that Posterity (if posterity deems it) will be cloth with some future Anecdotalist





mind to weave it into a mock epic could I get the least hint of a squabble between Queen Astaroth and Dagon. If that matter goes further, pray give me early intelligence. A grave answer would do him too much honour, and to whip him on the back of his patrons would suit my fancy best. However, be assured I mean to turn myself entirely to that topic soon in some way or other.

You have set my friend Mr Gilpin I fear an impracticable task, and yourself with Lord Harcourt one much more so, by advising him to print his *Tours*.<sup>7</sup> Subscribers will never be found sufficient to pay the expense. You should have contrived to have done it by Lord North's assistance out of the surplus of the new loan. He has written to me on the subject and I have advised him to risk only some detached part by way of experiment.<sup>8</sup>

I find our deputies are obliged to undeputize themselves before they can petition Parliament.<sup>9</sup> I have little hopes that a petition of 40 country gentlemen will be much attended to by the present Parliament.<sup>10</sup> I think they will put them under custody of the serjeant-at-arms for their presumption, if not into Newgate. No matter—all is over, and I should not have broached this topic had it not been merely to fill my paper. Did you set the rose leaves of your *treillage* at Strawberry on fire by your illuminations for Santa Eustacia?<sup>11</sup>

Yours most truly,

W.M.

7. See *ante* 3 Feb. 1781 and n. 11.

8. Gilpin followed Mason's advice and published late in 1782 his *Observations on the River Wye and Several Parts of South Wales*, and did not publish the more ambitious two-volume *Observations on Several Parts of England, Particularly the Mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland*, until 1786, when the success of the earlier volume was established. See W. D. Templeman, *The Life and Work of William Gilpin*; Urbana, 1939, p. 231, and *post* 4 Dec. 1782.

9. On 3 March 1781 the deputies of several local associations for Parliamentary reform met in London to consider an application to Parliament 'for correcting the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money, and for reducing the . . . influence of the Crown' (Wyvill, *Political*

*Papers* i. 384-5). A petition was resolved upon, and Sir George Savile was requested to present it to the House of Commons as from freeholders, not deputies (*ibid.* i. 389-91). The objection to petitions from delegates or deputies of associations was that the associations had no defined rights and powers in the constitution, and were held by many, who could cite as an example the Protestant Association that fomented the Gordon riots, to be both dangerous and illegal. The debates on the petition presented on 2 April 1781 are reported in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 95-9 and 138-200.

10. Mason was right. See Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 200, *post* 15 May 1781, and G. S. Veitch, *The Genesis of Parliamentary Reform*, 1913, p. 77.

11. 'Last night all the houses in most

## TO MASON, Friday 30 March 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 165-7.

March 30, 1781.

YOU flatten our correspondence so much by never answering my letters,<sup>1</sup> that I have not spirit to keep it up; it would look as if I delighted in writing. You have not even told me that you received the MS of Gray's life; surely that did not leave you totally without matter for a line! The country I allow does not furnish topics like the capital, and yet unless I wrote of Vestris and the follies of fashion, what else makes sensation here? the departure of the fleet that leaves us as exposed as we were before the conquest to Danes and Saxons, makes none:<sup>2</sup> a much more distant revolution than might happen here does make impression, or I should still not write. Adieu, the golden sands of the Ganges (all the water of which would not wash away our corruptions), adieu the diamonds of Bengal! Rumbold is the last waiter at White's, whose babe will be rocked in a cradle of gems;<sup>3</sup> and Sykes<sup>4</sup> the last footman, who will be created a baronet for

of the principal streets in the City and West End of the town were illuminated on account of the good news arrived yesterday from Admiral Rodney' (*London Courant* 14 March 1781). St Eustatius, an island in the Dutch West Indies, surrendered to the English fleet under Rodney 3 Feb. 1781. The value of the spoils was estimated at £3,000,000 (*Last Journals* ii. 356; W. M. James, *The British Navy in Adversity*, 1926, pp. 254-5). When the King awarded them to the army and navy there was a public scandal, since some of the property seized belonged to British merchants (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 218-62; *Last Journals* ii. 358).

1. HW had not received Mason's letter of 29 March.

2. On 13 March 1781 Adm. George Darby (d. 1790), who in 1780 had succeeded Geary as commander-in-chief of the Channel Fleet, sailed with twenty-eight ships of the line and a great convoy to relieve the besieged British garrison at Gibraltar (W. M. James, *The British Navy in Adversity*, 1926, p. 302). HW looked on the

venture as 'a most desperate stroke,' for 'as large a French fleet was at Brest, and another Spanish as large at Cadiz. If they joined or enclosed ours, the odds were great; if they did not, the Channel was open to the French; we had no ships at home, nor a camp formed' (*Last Journals* ii. 356). HW's fears were not realized, and Gibraltar was relieved. See *post* 6 May 1781 and James, 303-6.

3. HW doubtless has in mind a story that recently appeared in the public press: 'The cradle belonging to Lady Rumbold . . . was made of cane, covered with cloth of gold, ornamented with pearls and diamonds. The rockers were of solid gold' (*London Courant* 28 Feb. 1781). On Rumbold's alleged early employment as a waiter at White's, see *ante* 1 Nov. 1780.

4. Sir Francis Sykes (1732-1804), Indian administrator, M. P. Shaftesbury 1771-5 and 1780-4, Wallingford 1784-1804, was created a baronet 24 March 1781 (*London Gazette* 24 March). In a note on l. 132 of Mason's *Epistle to Dr Shebbeare* HW says that Sykes was at one time a footman to Lord Vere (Mason's *Satirical Poems* 120).

being worth some lacs of rupees! The Nabob of Arcot will have no more members of Parliament for retainers,<sup>5</sup> Lord Sandwich will carry no more gold muslins cross the Park,<sup>6</sup> and should Lord North want another loan of twelve millions to enrich Mr Drummond<sup>7</sup> and his clerks and livery servants, he must not reckon on the Indian Company. Hyder Ali has dispersed all our visions of endless wealth;<sup>8</sup> Lord Clive usurped,<sup>9</sup> Lord Pigot died, and Paul Benfield has been a rascal and has returned under the sanction of Parliament and of his Grace of York<sup>10</sup> to be one again, in vain! yes, India and America are alike escaping out of the talons of the Scotch. Cargoes of bad news arrived

Other versions of the story of Sykes's humble beginnings were current; there was probably no truth in any of them. See James M. Holzman, *The Nabobs in England*, New York, 1926, p. 44.

5. The Nawab's Parliamentary influence in the recently elected Parliament was common gossip in the early part of 1781. Thomas Townshend alluded to the rumours in a speech in the House of Commons 30 April 1781: 'It was said, and he believed with some truth, that at this moment the Nabob of Arcot had between seven and eight members in that House devoted to his service' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 122).

6. That is, from the Admiralty across St James's Park to Buckingham House. Whether Sandwich had actually made any such gifts of Indian goods to the Queen has not been discovered, but HW's implication that Sandwich at that time held the chief power in the East India Company is supported by a speech of Fox in the House of Commons 24 Jan. 1782: 'In the year 1781 . . . of all the ministers in the cabinet there was not one more formidable, perhaps not one so formidable from influence, as the Earl of Sandwich. . . . This influence he derived from the East India Company' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 878-9). Wraxall wrote, 'On all great occasions, when the concealed springs of that complicated machine denominated the East India Company were necessary to be touched, application was made to Lord Sandwich' (*Historical Memoirs*, 1836, ii. 188). For evidence that this view of Sandwich's power is somewhat exaggerated see Lucy S.

Sutherland, *The East India Company in Eighteenth-Century Politics*, Oxford, 1952, pp. 278-9.

7. Robert Drummond (1728-1804), banker (*Scots Peerage* viii. 229; F. G. Hilton Price, *A Handbook of London Bankers*, 1876, p. 52). '26th [March 1781]. Sir George Saville moved for an inquiry into Lord North's behaviour on the loan. Mr Byng produced numberless instances of his partiality in that affair. Drummond, the banker, had £84,000 in his own name, and treble in those of his clerks' (*Last Journals* ii. 357). According to Byng, the total amount subscribed in the names of Drummond's clerks (apparently to disguise the magnitude of the firm's investment) was £438,000 (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 10).

8. Haidar Shāh, called Haidar Ali, Khān Bahādur (ca 1722-82), Nawab of Mysore, an Indian adventurer, in an effort to extend his dominions, in June 1780 led an army into the Carnatic, where the Nawab of Arcot ruled. He was ultimately defeated, but his initial victories caused consternation. See *The Cambridge History of India* v. 283; Vincent A. Smith, *The Oxford History of India*, 1923, pp. 541-2; Lewin B. Bowring, *Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan*, Oxford, 1893. News of Haidar's invasion had just reached England (*London Courant* 29 March 1781).

9. Charges against Clive in 1772, which were never satisfactorily established, represented him as 'a monster in assassination, usurpation, and extortion' (*Last Journals* i. 72).

10. For Markham's support of Benfield see *ante* 3 Feb. 1781 and n. 18.

on Tuesday from East and West. Tarleton is beaten,<sup>11</sup> and the twenty thousand pounds that purchased Arnold's treachery are likely to have been bestowed to no purpose.<sup>12</sup> Another disgrace is that the Dutch manifesto convicts us of a notorious and gross lie, that of affirming that they refused an answer to our complaint of Van Berchel;<sup>13</sup> that lie we endeavour to support by hinting to the Amsterdammers in all the Court newspapers, that they would do *well* to tear him and the magistrates piecemeal.<sup>14</sup>

Having passed the bounds of all shame, we have returned the forbearance of the French at the Grenades<sup>15</sup> to our proprietors, by the contrary practice at St Eustatia;<sup>16</sup> Lord George Germaine however

11. By the American forces under Gen. Daniel Morgan at the battle of Cowpens, South Carolina, 17 Jan. 1781. In England the administration tried to make light of the defeat, but it proved to be a major factor in the failure of Cornwallis's campaign in the South (*London Courant* 28, 29, and 30 March and 2 April 1781; *Last Journals* ii. 358; DNB *sub* Tarleton).

12. Benedict Arnold (1741–1801), Maj.-Gen. in the American army, 1777, entered into treasonable correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton in May or June 1779, and in 1780, after being put in command of the American post at West Point, asked £20,000 for the betrayal of the fort. Clinton agreed, but the Americans frustrated the betrayal by capturing Major John André, Clinton's representative in the transaction. Arnold escaped. The total sum that he received for his part in the affair was £6,525. He was made a brigadier-general in the British army and in Dec. 1780 was put in command of an expedition to Virginia (*Dictionary of American Biography*; *Last Journals* ii. 334–5; Carl Van Doren, *The Secret History of the American Revolution*, New York, 1941, pp. 385, 418–20, and *passim*). On 30 March 1780 it was reported in the *London Courant* that Arnold 'was entrenched, waiting for relief, without being able to stir.'

13. Engelbert François van Berckel (1726–96), chief magistrate of Amsterdam, 1762–87 (*Biographisch Woordenboek der Nederlanden*, ed. A. J. van der Aa, Haarlem, 1852–78). In Sept. 1780 the English discovered that a treaty of amity and com-

merce between Holland and the United States had been approved by Van Berckel and the other magistrates of Amsterdam. Explanations and the punishment of Van Berckel were demanded, and the unsatisfactory nature of the Dutch replies was made the occasion of a manifesto and declaration of war on 20 Dec. 1780 (*Annual Register*, 1780, xxiii. 356, 375–9). In the counter-manifesto issued by Holland on 10 March 1781 the treaty signed by Van Berckel was declared to be 'without the sanction of any public authority' and was said to have been publicly disclaimed and disapproved on 27 Nov. 1780 (*Lloyd's Evening Post* 23–6 March 1781, xlviii. 289–90; *Annual Register*, 1781, xxiv. 298; *Last Journals* ii. 358). See Sir Francis Piggott and G. W. T. Omond, *Documentary History of the Armed Neutralities*, 1919, pp. 288–94.

14. HW probably has in mind the stories then current in London of riots in Amsterdam against Van Berckel and the magistrates. He may have believed that the reports were spread abroad by the administration in the hope of promoting dissension in Holland. See *post* 1 April 1781.

15. *Sic*: perhaps HW confused Grenada with the Grenadines.

16. Burke stressed this contrast in a speech 14 May 1781 (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 231). The French captured Grenada in July 1779 (*Annual Register*, 1779, xxii. \*201–\*202), and their honourable treatment of the British landholders is thus described in a memorial prepared by the British merchants of St Christopher's:

out of modesty or pride has refused to avow this scandalous proceeding under his hand, in his answer to our merchants who have remonstrated against it.<sup>17</sup>

Your cloth, who will not be behindhand in any effrontery, take occasion to distinguish their zeal. Bishop *Proteus*<sup>18</sup> of Chester affirms the Roman Catholics decrease, an excellent reason for flinging indulgencies at their heads, to invite them back;<sup>19</sup> Dr Bagot<sup>20</sup> has published the silliest, emptiest, of all petty pamphlets against a Dr Bell,<sup>21</sup> who has written on the Sacrament, and the whole purpose of the former is to have an opportunity of calling Bishop Hoadley, Socinian.<sup>22</sup> I am glad the monk Bagot and the atheist Hume meet cordially in abuse on the excellent Bishop.<sup>23</sup> Tucker has published

'Grenada being taken by storm, without capitulation, was at the mercy of the conquerors. The Count d'Estaing did not, however, seize the property of individuals, though he issued edicts to prevent the payment of debts due in Great Britain, and displaced agents of absentees by appointing trustees to receive the produce of the estates. But even these measures caused an universal clamour among the enlightened part of the French nation, who carried remonstrances to the throne of an absolute monarch, and Count d'Estaing's conduct was severely reprobated, his edicts rescinded, and the inhabitants put upon the same footing with French subjects in that island' (summary in Robinson's *New Annual Register*, 1781, p. 39).

17. 'Lord Sandwich, to captivate the navy, persuaded the King to give the private property at St Eustatia to the captors. . . . The West India merchants were alarmed at this savage and dangerous precedent, and remonstrated to Lord George Germaine. He told them the King had ordered it; but, though they pressed for a written answer, he was ashamed or did not dare to give it' (*Last Journals* ii. 358; cf. *London Courant* 24 March 1781).

18. Beilby Porteus (1731-1809), Bp of Chester 1776-87, of London 1787-1809.

19. On 19 March 1781 in the House of Lords, in answer to an assertion that the number of Roman Catholics in Chester had doubled between 1717 and 1781, Porteus questioned the accuracy of the figures given for 1717 and argued that

the proportion of Catholics to Protestants had considerably decreased. On 27 March he cited figures to show that throughout England there was a decrease in the number of Roman Catholics (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxi. 1375-9). HW's representation of Porteus's indulgence towards Catholicism is not altogether accurate. The Bishop opposed 'a total and indiscriminate repeal' of the penal laws and believed that measures should be adopted effectively to impede the spread of Roman Catholicism (*ibid.* xxi. 1377).

20. Lewis Bagot (1740-1802), divine; D.C.L., Oxford, 1772; Bp of Bristol, 1782; of Norwich, 1783; of St Asaph, 1790.

21. William Bell (1731-1816), latitudinarian divine; D.D., Cambridge, 1767; domestic chaplain and secretary to Princess Amelia; prebendary of Westminster, 1765; treasurer of St Paul's; founder of the Bell scholarships at Cambridge. Publication of Bagot's pamphlet, *A Letter to the Rev. William Bell . . . on the Subject of His Late Publications upon the Authority, Nature, and Design of the Lord's Supper* was announced in the *London Chronicle* 29-31 March 1781, xlix. 308. It was directed at Bell's *An Attempt to Ascertain and Illustrate the Authority, Nature, and Design of the Institution of Christ, Commonly Called the Communion and the Lord's Supper*, 1780.

22. Bagot connects Hoadly with the Socinian heresy on pp. 5 and 9 of his pamphlet.

23. For Hume's 'abuse' of Hoadly see *ante* 5 Feb. 1781.

his attack on Locke<sup>24</sup>—In short we shall not stop till all virtue and all sense, as well as all Europe, are our enemies; I am sick of writing on such themes, and since you do not answer me, this letter is long enough.

### TO MASON, Sunday 1 April 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 168–70.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, April 1, 1781.

**Y**OUR letter and mine crossed each other. As you have made *amende honorable* for your indolence, it is but equitable on my side to absolve you. Nay you merit more by the promise you make me, and like a fond mother that taps a favourite, I am ready to shower sugar-plums on you to cure the slap that did not hurt you. Seriously the mock heroic would be the highest completion of my wishes; it is what I have always recommended to you, not only as best suited to your genius, but as uniting those two distant talents, both which you eminently possess,—harmonious poetry and wit. Pray let Dr Johnson feel that a *Dispensary* can make itself be read, and I will answer that it will continue to be so. The quarrel with Ashtarothe, I believe, has gone no farther, and will not furnish above an episode, but I have sent you materials enough, I am sure, of late, to stock you with congenial topics, unless a system to recall the monkish ages can fail being a magazine. In the mean time your *Garden* shall be welcome, though like his Majesty's herb-woman, I hope it will only strew flowers before the grand procession.<sup>1</sup>

If you will not read the Constantinopolitan historian, you will at least not disdain to turn to a particular passage or two: look at page 46 of vol. ii, on the reduction of the legions, beginning at the words, *the same timid policy*.<sup>2</sup> Lord John<sup>3</sup> says, he is persuaded that Gibbon

24. Josiah Tucker's *A Treatise concerning Civil Government*, which apparently was not published until 13 April (*London Chronicle* 12–14 April 1781, xlix. 354), although publication 'in a few days' had been promised two weeks earlier (*ibid.* 27–9 March xlix. 301).

led by the 'King's herb woman, with her six maids, strewing the way with herbs' (GM 1761, xxxi. 418).

2. 'The same timid policy of dividing whatever is united, of reducing whatever is eminent, of dreading every active power, and of expecting that the most feeble will prove the most obedient, seems to pervade the institutions of several princes, and particularly those of Con-

1. Of satires from Mason's pen. The procession to the coronation of George III was

had thrown in that and such sentences and sentiments when he was paying court to Charles Fox, and forgot to correct them after his change.<sup>4</sup>

You are very good in condescending to make an apology for mentioning your deputies. It would become me rather to ask your pardon for differing with you on any part of that business. My discordance was founded on the unhappy knowledge I have of my countrymen, who, I was sure, as it proved, would be glad to seize any opportunity of division to withdraw from their engagements. Mr W[yvill]'s success<sup>5</sup> had inspired him with too much confidence. Whoever will govern must submit to be governed; I mean that one must yield in many points to carry the principal. But I will say no more on that head, since the moment has been lost; yet I do not envy those who are delivered from domestic alarms. The complaisance of the Parliament does but insure ruin; every vote that is carried plunges us deeper, and had the American or Spanish or Dutch war been resisted, it had been happy for England. Falsehood demanded every vote, and gold procured every one. The mines will fail, and then truth will emerge, though much too late. As to Mr Gilpin, Lord Harcourt's plan and mine was that he should execute the prints himself,<sup>6</sup> which we thought would be easy, if he could learn the aquatinta,

stantine' (*Decline and Fall*, ii. 46). This passage was also quoted in the *London Courant* 21 March 1781 (where HW may have noticed it), with the following comment: 'What an exact picture has this historian drawn of those councils which he once opposed, and which he now despises while he supports! The expression "seems to pervade the institutions of several princes," strikes us as implying a great deal. *Quære*, if the writer had listened to his conscience, would it not have dictated for Constantine a more modern and familiar name?'

3. Cavendish.

4. Fox and Gibbon seem for a time in 1777 and 1778 to have been on friendly terms, and early in 1778 Gibbon voted twice with the Opposition, but then returned to the side of the administration. In 1779 he was rewarded with the post of a lord of trade. As Mr D. M. Low observes, it is likely that Fox courted Gibbon in an effort to win him to the Opposition rather

than that Gibbon sought out Fox, though there is no doubt that Gibbon took pleasure in Fox's company (*Edward Gibbon*, 1937, pp. 274-6, 278).

5. In organizing the York Association and in fostering the establishment of similar bodies in other places.

6. Gilpin seems to have experimented with aquatint engraving but never to have become satisfied with the technique, though he used drawings reproduced in this manner in many of his 'picturesque' books. The plates for his first travel book, the *Observations on the River Wye*, 1782, were not made by Gilpin but were etched by 'a young man, a relation of mine' (p. vi), probably, as Mr W. D. Templeman kindly informs us, William Sawrey Gilpin (1762-1843), who later acquired a considerable reputation as an artist. Gilpin may have made the aquatint engravings for his *Observations on . . . the Mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland*, 1786, for he discusses the in-

which seems an easy and expeditious method, for one that can draw so well. As to encouragement, we do not flatter ourselves that we have interest, and I am sure there is no advising anybody to risk expense at present; extravagance itself begins to calculate.

As this is only a postscript to my last, it is long enough. I shall carry it to town tomorrow and add anything that I hear before Tuesday evening. Last night's *Gazette* has endeavoured to wipe out Tarleton's defeat by some meagre advantages since,<sup>7</sup> and the bells here have rung for them, for all chimes are retained in the pay of the government, and perhaps the insurrection at Amsterdam went into the tune,<sup>8</sup> though I know that even the great Sir Joseph Yorke, as the newspapers call him,<sup>9</sup> did not believe it on Friday night, and there is no mail come since.

Tuesday evening.

I may seal my letter, for I have nothing to add.

## TO MASON, Saturday 14 April 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 170-2.

Strawberry Hill, April 14, 1781.

AS all our politics are at sea,<sup>1</sup> I have none to send you, for the only land-topic of that class I am in the dark about, I mean the Chancellor's mumbling of Lord Sandwich and Lord Bathurst;<sup>2</sup> for

convenience of the method and remarks that he 'took all the pains he could, by correcting the proofs, to make the plates what he wished them' (i. pp. xxx-xxxi). Mr Templeman writes that there is no other evidence of Gilpin's executing aquatint engravings for his books.

7. Wilmington, North Carolina, was reported taken, and both Cornwallis and Tarleton were credited with victories in minor engagements with the enemy's militia (*London Gazette* 31 March 1781).

8. 'Some letters were received by yesterday's Dutch mail, which bring an account of a violent insurrection at Amsterdam, where the mob having become very powerful, bid defiance to the magistrates and the military, had destroyed the houses

of Van Berkel, and several other merchants, who had been principally concerned in the American negotiation. . . . Many persons in this city do not give much credit to the report of the insurrection' (*Lloyd's Evening Post* 28-30 March 1781, xlviii. 312). The story seems to have been untrue.

9. See *ante* 3 March 1781, n. 2.

1. The Channel Fleet had set sail for Gibraltar (*ante* 30 March 1781).

2. Sandwich and Bathurst spoke for the commutation of tithes during the debate on the Ilmington enclosure bill 30 March 1781. Lord Chancellor Thurlow spoke against it (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 71-2; *Last Journals* ii. 359).



though tithes were the occasion, they certainly were not the cause: some quarrel there is supposed to be in the cabinet, I know not what nor care.<sup>3</sup>

Your Primate on Sunday was sevensnight, preached a sermon at the Royal Chapel,<sup>4</sup> that sounded as sour, and probably had much the same foundation as the Chancellor's discontent. The shaft seemed to be aimed at his quondam pupil,<sup>5</sup> as it reproved unbounded indulgence of the passions, and satirized the ambition of being an expert charioteer,<sup>6</sup> then daring higher, his Grace condemned the waste of the lives of subjects from the obstinate pursuit of empty titles of sovereignty. *Diable, où en sommes-nous?*

Dean Milles is going to revive Rowley, yet so as by laudanum.<sup>7</sup> Mr Bryant too is a convert;<sup>8</sup> I asked him t'other night at Lord Dacre's,<sup>9</sup> if he could seriously believe that Rowley was the author of what Chatterton ascribed to him. He said, 'oh no, he was persuaded those poems were much *older* than Rowley';<sup>10</sup> I smiled, and begged he would not take it ill, if I told him what happened to me a few years ago: Governor Pownall<sup>11</sup> had tired me to death with reading a

3. A few weeks later Fox was to declare in the House (8 May 1781) that the Chancellor was the only person in the administration who could be called able, honest, and independent of mind, that he was hated by his colleagues for his virtue, and that he held them in contempt (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 185).

4. 'Yesterday [8 April] being Palm Sunday their Majesties attended divine service at the Chapel Royal; his Grace the Archbishop of York preached' (*London Chronicle* 7-10 April 1781, xlix. 338). Mason at first doubted HW's report and asked Alderson to inquire about it, but he was convinced when he heard Markham deliver a sermon at York in September 1781 on the government of the passions, closely resembling the one HW had described. See *post* 1 Oct. 1781.

5. The Prince of Wales. Markham had been his governor 1771-6.

6. The *London Courant* 24 March 1781 reported, 'Yesterday the Prince of Wales took an airing round Fulham and Hammersmith, in a phaeton with a new set of horses, which his Royal Highness drove.'

7. Mitford's text may be corrupt, but HW's meaning is clear: Milles will revive

Rowley by publishing a dull edition of him. Milles's edition, with an introduction and notes purporting to prove Rowley's authorship of the poems attributed to him by Chatterton, was published 8 Dec. 1781 (CHATTERTON 237 n. 9).

8. To belief in the antiquity of the Rowley poems. See Cole to HW 30 June 1781, COLE ii. 277-8. Bryant's *Observations upon the Poems of Thomas Rowley* was published 1 Dec. 1781 (CHATTERTON 236 n. 5). HW's MS notes are printed in CHATTERTON, Appendix 1, pp. 351-7.

9. Thomas Barrett-Lennard (1717-86), 17th Bn Dacre of the South; HW's friend and correspondent. His town house was in Bruton Street, Berkeley Square (*Court and City Register*, 1781, p. 18).

10. Bryant apparently changed his mind, for in his *Observations* he argued for Rowley's authorship of the poems. See *post* 20 Dec. 1781, and CHATTERTON 354 n. 13.

11. Thomas Pownall (1722-1805), politician and antiquary; lieutenant-governor of New Jersey, 1753; governor of Massachusetts 1757-9, and of South Carolina 1759-60; M. P. Tregony 1767-74, Minehead 1774-80; HW's correspondent.

dissertation on the ruins of a building in Ireland,<sup>12</sup> which he maintained were the remains of a temple built by the Danes on the foundation of a much older edifice raised by some nation who lived so long ago that nobody knows who they were; I did not dare to add that I suppose they were the Ammonians.<sup>13</sup>

Sir Joshua Reynolds has lent me Dr Johnson's life of Pope,<sup>14</sup> which Sir Joshua holds to be a *chef-d'œuvre*. It is a most trumpery performance and stuffed with all his crabbed phrases and vulgarisms, and much trash as anecdotes; you shall judge yourself:—he says, that all he can discover of Pope's correspondent Mr Cromwell<sup>15</sup> is that he used to hunt in a tie-wig.<sup>16</sup> The *Elegy on the Unfortunate Lady* he says, *signifies the amorous fury of a raving girl*;<sup>17</sup> and yet he admires the subject of *Eloïsa's Epistle to Abelard*.<sup>18</sup> The machinery in *The Rape of the Lock* he calls *combinations of skilful genius with happy casuality*,<sup>19</sup> in English I guess a *lucky thought*; publishing proposals is turned into *emitting* them.<sup>20</sup> But the 66th page is still more curious, it contains a philosophic solution of Pope's not transcribing the whole *Iliad* as soon as he thought he should, and it concludes with this piece of bombast nonsense, *he that runs against time has an antagonist not subject to casualties*. Pope's house here he calls *the house to which his residence afterwards procured so much celebration*,<sup>21</sup> and that *his vanity produced a grotto where necessity enforced a passage*;<sup>22</sup> and that, *of his intellectual character, the constituent and fundamental principle was good sense, a prompt and intuitive perception of consonance and propriety*.<sup>23</sup> Was poor good sense ever

12. Its subject was probably the so-called Dundalk ship-temple, near Dublin, concerning which Pownall wrote a letter in 1781 to Charles Vallancey, printed in Vallancey's *Collectanea de rebus Hibernicis*, 1770–1804, iii. 197–209, and a communication in 1783 to the Society of Antiquaries, printed in *Archæologia* vii. 149–57.

13. Described by Herodotus (ii. 42) as a joint colony of Egyptians and Ethiopians speaking a language between the two. In one of his papers on Ireland (*Archæologia* iii. 355–70), Pownall alludes (p. 357) to Ammonian horns.

14. Published as vol. vii of the *Prefaces, Biographical and Critical*.

15. Henry Cromwell (ca. 1658–1728), critic and poet. See Elwin and Courthope,

*Works of Pope*, 1871–89, v. 75–6, and *Lives of the Poets*, ed. G. B. Hill, 1905, iii. 92. Pope's correspondence with Cromwell is printed in his *Works* vi. 61–134.

16. *Prefaces* vii. 17–18.

17. 'Poetry has not often been worse employed than in dignifying the amorous fury of a raving girl' (ibid. vii. 36).

18. 'The mixture of religious hope and resignation gives an elevation and dignity to disappointed love, which images merely natural cannot bestow' (ibid. vii. 44).

19. Ibid. vii. 42.

20. 'Pope, having now emitted his proposals . . .' (ibid. vii. 56).

21. Ibid. vii. 109.

22. Ibid. vii. 111.

23. Ibid. vii. 256.

so unmercifully overlaid by a babbling old woman! How was it possible to marshal words so ridiculously? He seems to have read the ancients with no view but of pilfering polysyllables, utterly insensible to the graces of their simplicity, and these are called standards of biography! I forgot he calls Lord Hervey's challenging Pulteney, *summoning him to a duel*.<sup>24</sup> Hurlothrumbo talked plain English in comparison of this wight on stilts,<sup>25</sup> but I doubt I have wearied you,—send me something to put my mouth in taste again.

### From MASON, Saturday 21 April 1781

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Aston, April 21st, '81.

AS I have been reading Mr Gibbon I am rather sceptical, and as I have been reading also Dr Tucker I am somewhat of a black-guard. I therefore distrust your anecdote about my diocesan. I will not however call you a *rank fibber* as the last mentioned writer calls people *rank* republicans,<sup>1</sup> but still I must say I distrust your veracity on this point, but not from an internal but external cause, because I cannot conceive how he could preach on the Sunday you mention, as I am enough versed in the etiquette of Lent preachments to know his turn did not come till either Good Friday or Easter Sunday.<sup>2</sup> Pray clear up this matter if possible for I would fain have this anecdote uncontrovertibly true, and should be glad too of more particulars. This said diocesan has issued out his mandate concerning a visitation in June, which will tie me down to my parish till it be over.

As I have in my time kept worse company than you ever did, and am more used to vulgarity, I have been able to read great part of the Dean of Gloucester's long expected attack on Locke,<sup>3</sup> but I am sure

24. Ibid. vii. 188.

25. In the bombastic opera *Hurlo-thrumbo* (see *ante* i. 355 n. 11) the author, Samuel Johnson the dancing-master, walked on stilts.

throughout Tucker's book, but the epithet 'rank' is nowhere applied to them.

2. Markham preached at the Royal Chapel on both Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday (*London Chronicle* 7-10 and 14-17 April, xlix. 338, 362).

3. An advertisement printed in the front of Tucker's published *Letter to Edmund Burke*, 1775, suggests that the

1. The 'disagreeable company of modern republicans' is vigorously attacked

you will not be able to read a single page of it; you could as soon drink gin with a Wapping landlady. I wish however I could prevail on you to read the last paragraph<sup>4</sup> which sums up his whole doctrine and which is neither more nor less than that of his worthy brother in the old song of the *Vicar of Bray*.<sup>5</sup>

That this is law I will maintain  
Unto my dying day, Sir,  
That whatsoever King shall reign  
I'll be the Vicar of Bray, Sir.

As this is the most commodious doctrine which ever was invented for churchmen, no wonder that the reverend bench revised it so cordially and spoke so handsomely of it when it was handed to their inspection in an unpublished state.<sup>6</sup>

I thank you for your last farrago of Demogorgon jargon.<sup>7</sup> How can poor Sir Joshua be such an oaf to admire such a writer, when his own style<sup>8</sup> is so free from those blemishes? I shrewdly suspect he will show Johnson my translation and that, as he will certainly abuse it, Sir Joshua will lay aside the thought of annotations.<sup>9</sup> Be this as it

*Treatise concerning Civil Government* was then in preparation: 'The present critical juncture obliges the author to postpone his animadversions on Mr Locke's theory of government for some time longer.'

4. The doctrine expressed in the paragraph is that 'every individual . . . ought to be subject in Christian sincerity, without guile or fraud, to the higher powers, the powers for the time being; notwithstanding any defect of title imputed to them. . . . Notwithstanding any little cavils and objections which may be made against this doctrine, it is the only scheme that ever was, or ever can be reduced to practice; and it is also the law of the land' (*Treatise concerning Civil Government*, 1781, p. 428).

5. Which celebrates the skill of a time-serving parson in retaining the living of Bray by adopting the prevailing religious sentiments of the successive reigns of Charles, James, William, Anne, and George I, during whose reign the song was written. An attempt to identify the vicar and the author of the song is to be

found in N&Q 1885, 6th ser., xi. 167, 255, 335, and 477.

6. In 1778 Tucker had 'caused the press to strike off about 50 or 60 copies of the principal parts of the present treatise' which he submitted to 'the learned and judicious both far and near' and entreated 'the benefit of their corrections and amendments, in case they should judge so favourably of this specimen, as to encourage me to proceed' (*Treatise*, p. 367). This was the privately printed *Notions of Mr Locke and his Followers*, [Gloucester, 1778]. Mason seems to have heard that bishops were among Tucker's correspondents and encouragers. See his satire against Tucker, *The Dean and the 'Squire*, 1782 (mentioned *post* 25 April and 7 May 1782), p. 3.

7. The quotations from Johnson's life of Pope (*ante* 14 April 1781).

8. In his *Discourses*.

9. Mason's fears proved groundless, and when Reynolds sent Johnson a copy of the published work Johnson said of Mason's translation, 'I find him better than exact, he has his author's distinctness and

may I will give him fair time for the purpose, as I am in no haste about publishing it.

Pray does Rasp's book proceed towards a publication? I wish much to see it. You find I am reduced to asking of questions, and how should it be otherwise when I have nothing for you of information. Was I to tell you that I drink Hyder Ally's health every day in a glass of port, perhaps it might prompt you to pledge me in your glass of orange juice.<sup>10</sup> Pray do so. I am sorry, however, that the news of his victories come so rapidly.<sup>11</sup> I wish we might hear no more of him till Lord North has unchartered the East India Company<sup>12</sup> and then the more the merrier. I remember five years ago that madwoman who works in wax<sup>13</sup> told me when I went to see her raree show, 'that if there was a God and a Providence which she firmly believed there was, and hoped (as I seemed to be a parson) that I believed the same, that the Americans would never be conquered,' so I am inclined to rest my friend Hyder Ally's success on the same foundation.

I shall hope having spun out this scrawl to a competent length you will continue your wonted kindness to me and give me something for my nothing. In this hope I remain

Yours very truly,

W.M.

clearness without his dryness and sterility' (Johnson to Reynolds 19 Feb. 1783, *The Letters of Samuel Johnson*, ed. R. W. Chapman, Oxford, 1952, iii. 9).

10. No other reference to HW's drinking orange juice has been found. According to Pinkerton his favourite drink was ice water (*Walpoliana* i. p. xlii).

11. The newspapers of the past few days had carried detailed accounts of Haidar Ali's successes. See, e.g., *London Courant* 20 April 1781.

12. The charter of privileges of the East India Company, granted in 1744, expired in 1780, when it was renewed for a year. Speaking in the House 9 and 27 April,

Lord North revealed his wish to bring the government of India more directly under Parliamentary control by not renewing the company's charter (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 108-17). After investigations by a secret committee the charter was renewed for ten years, but under regulating legislation. See H. H. Dodwell, *British India 1497-1858*, Cambridge, 1929 (*Cambridge History of India*, vol. v), pp. 181-4, 191-2; Lucy S. Sutherland *The East India Company in Eighteenth-Century Politics*, Oxford, 1952, pp. 356-60.

13. Mrs Patience Wright. See *ante* 19 May 1780, n. 13.

## TO MASON, Wednesday 25 April 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 175-8.

Strawberry Hill, April 25, 1781.

THOUGH the list of Lent preachers may contradict me ever so flatly, the fact<sup>1</sup> was not a jot less true. I heard it three hours after the delivery of the sermon from one that was present and several times since; nay it gave so much offence to the *charioteer* (who was also, nobody knows why, called a *gladiator*) that he swore, 'D—n the scoundrel, I will never forgive him.' The insult surprised even in London, hardened as we are to inconsistency.<sup>2</sup> I know no more about it, but that the sermon was understood as a satire there is no doubt, nor that it was so taken by the object of it. That the *intention* may be denied is very likely, for what will not a bishop say or unsay? for instance, my Lord of Oxford<sup>3</sup> dining lately at Lambeth, declaimed against Dr Bell for supporting Hoadley's doctrine on the Sacrament.<sup>4</sup> Another divine there present told me, that he actually has in print an anonymous pamphlet written formerly by *Butler himself* against Warburton<sup>6</sup> for censuring Hoadley on that occasion, but is there a yard of lawn in England more dirty than Butler's?<sup>7</sup> If I meet with Tucker's book I will, to oblige you, read the last sentence, but I certainly will not buy it, nor will pay for following their clergy through every kennel. In truth, I have a mind to save my money and my eyes, and read no more. We are in a state of reprobation, and have no more sense left, than principles. It is but just now that I have waded through three thousand lines of a poem called *Burlesque*,<sup>8</sup>

1. Of Markham's sermon in the Royal Chapel (*ante* 14 and 21 April 1781).

2. Markham was regarded as a courtier.

3. John Butler.

4. For Bell's treatise see *ante* 30 March 1781, n. 21.

5. *Superficial Observations upon the Lord Bishop of Gloucester's Rational Account of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, 1761.

6. William Warburton (1698-1779), Bp of Gloucester 1759-79; theologian and editor.

7. HW 'recommended Butler to Lord Hertford for a King's chaplain, Butler

professing, as he had a good fortune, that he wished but for a feather, and desired neither deanery nor bishopric. . . . Yet no sooner had this *unambitious* priest entered on his new office, than he became one of the most servile of his cloth, and by a zealous Fast sermon and other courtly acts obtained a bishopric' (*Last Journals* i. 103). See *ibid.* ii. 136 and *ante* 18 Aug. 1779.

8. Possibly *The Eviad: A Burlesque Poem in Two Cantos*, an anonymous scriptural parody described in the *Critical Review* Feb. 1781, li. 155, as 'dull, obscene, and detestable nonsense.' Mitford's text

which diverted me as much as a dose of diacodium<sup>9</sup> would do, in short, I will swear, as good royalists did in the civil war, to let my beard grow, till you write.<sup>10</sup> I had rather play at push-pin than read, only to unlearn all my ideas, and be told that King William and Marlborough were no heroes, Russell and Sydney no patriots, Locke and Hoadley no reasoners, Milton, Prior, Garth and Gray no poets; which leaves vacancies for Lord Mansfield and Lord George Germaine to slip into the seats of courage, Wedderburne and Hilsborough into those of patriotism, D. Hume and Johnson into those of solid argument, and all the bellmen of Oxford into those of poetry. As to Lord Chatham, the victories, conquests, extension of our empire within these last five years will annihilate his fame of course, and he may be replaced by Starvation Dundas,<sup>11</sup> whose pious policy suggested that the devil of *rebellion could be expelled only by fasting*, though that never drove him out of Scotland. Unfortunately, Dr Franklin was a truer politician, when he said he would furnish Mr Gibbon with materials for writing the History of the Decline of the British Empire,<sup>12</sup>

may be corrupt; HW may have written 'a burlesque.' No poem entitled *Burlesque* seems to have been published at this time, and nothing in HW's 'Poems of George III' fits this title.

9. An opiate (OED).

10. The Puritans also vowed not to cut their beards until their party prevailed (Reginald Reynolds, *Beards*, New York, 1949, pp. 242-3). Hudibras wore a beard that was

'—to stand fast,

As long as Monarchy should last,  
But when the state should hap to reel,  
'Twas to submit to fatal steel'

(*Hudibras*, pt I, canto i. 269-72).

11. Henry Dundas (1742-1811), cr. (1802) Vct Melville; Lord Advocate of Scotland 1775-83. HW's epithet alludes to Dundas's speech in the House 6 March 1775 advocating restraint of the trade and commerce of the New England colonies, in which he is reported to have said that 'as to the famine which was so pathetically lamented, he was afraid it would not be produced by this act' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xviii. 387). HW in a note on the speech (*Last Journals* i. 441) wrote, 'I believe it was on this occasion that Dundas coined the word *starvation*, which became a

nickname for him.' The OED remarks, *sub* 'starvation': 'The statement of Mitford [Walpole-Mason correspondence ii. 396] that Dundas himself used the word is in itself not improbable, but appears to lack confirmation. The verb *starve* occurs several times in the reports of speeches on the bill, but the substantive does not appear.' The earliest citation for 'starvation' given in OED is dated 1778, when it was used by Lady Craven in the epilogue to her *Sleep-Walker*, which HW printed at the SH press. See *ante* 17 Sept. 1778.

12. HW's source (probably a newspaper) has not been found. William Cobbett, who found the story in an unidentified issue of the New York *Daily Advertiser*, inserted it in his *Porcupine's Gazette* 18 Oct. 1797: 'When Franklin was on his mission to France previous to the alliance, he put up one night at an inn near the frontiers. Gibbon, the celebrated historian, happening to be in the same house, Franklin sent his compliments, requesting the pleasure of spending the evening with Gibbon. In answer he received a card, importing that "notwithstanding Mr Gibbon's regard for the character of Dr Franklin, as a man and a philosopher, he could not reconcile it with his duty to his

but I doubt he will not pen the character of Hyder Alli with so much complacency as that of Attila.

I have no news for you, as you may perceive by my rehashing these old grievances, but when chaos is come again,<sup>13</sup> what would signify a courier from Paradise? It adds to my vexation that you cannot or will not come. Well I will forget all the world, and though I will learn no creed or jargon of the day, I will find out some pastime that shall not have a grain of sense in it, and yet have much more meaning than anything in fashion, which will be no difficult task.

Raspe's book is finished and will be published next week.<sup>13a</sup> I do not ask for a letter, but a line to direct me how to send it to you.

A few words more, and I have done for the present. I shall be chagrined to the last degree if I do not see you here this summer, as you promised. I have many things to say to you that I cannot write, and I do not like to delay; I am grown lamentably old; and though my health is much better than last year, the mental part is far from being in the same order. I perceive decays in it every day, and I dread their increasing till I do not perceive them: this makes me withdraw a good deal from the world, and without any struggle, but I could wish to see more of the few friends I have left, and consequently the one I most admire. It is a sad invitation to tell you that I totter, but I am petitioning your heart and not your fancy, and know I apply to the right office; oh! but there is or may be an obstacle that I do fear: Lord Harcourt is to go to Harrowgate<sup>14</sup> and that journey may detain you in

King, to have any conversation with a *revolted subject!*" Franklin in reply wrote a note, declaring, that, "though Mr Gibbon's principles had compelled him to withhold the pleasure of his conversation, Dr Franklin still had such a respect for the character of Mr Gibbon, as a gentleman and a historian, that when, in the course of his writing the history of the *decline and fall of empires*, the *decline and fall of the British empire* should come to be his subject, as he expected it soon would, Dr Franklin would be happy to furnish him with *ample materials* which were in his possession" (*Porcupine's Works*, 1801, vii. 244-5). The story has not been confirmed. See D. M. Low, *Edward Gibbon*, 1937, pp. 258-9; Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin*, 1938, pp. 577-8.

13. 'Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul

But I do love thee; and when I love thee not,

Chaos is come again'

(*Othello*, III. iii. 90-2).

13a. The earliest advertisement that has been found is in *St James's Chronicle* 3-5 May. The copies HW received 26 April (see postscript) were probably in advance of publication.

14. During the summer of 1781 Harcourt took the waters there, and was visited by Mason (William Whitehead to Harcourt 11 and 18 Aug. and Sept. 1781, in *Harcourt Papers* vii. 348-50, and *post* 19 Sept. 1781).



the north! Well! pleasures are not the portion of age! I love you both too well to wish to separate you; and I will be content with your mutual satisfaction if it clashes with mine.

Thursday, 26th.

I have found a parcel of Raspe's books on my table; you shall have one the moment you draw for it.

There is nothing new, for I do not reckon the rodomontades of the *Gazette* on Rodney and Arbuthnot<sup>15</sup> novelties, they have not even raised the stocks a fraction.

TO MASON, Sunday 6 May 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 178-81.

Strawberry Hill, May 6, 1781.

I HAVE given Mr Stonhewer Raspe's book for you. I suppose it will set you on inventing twenty arts that were known five or six hundred years ago<sup>1</sup>—but I do not believe you will find a celestinette there, which was quite your own. There is a picture at the exhibition<sup>2</sup> in which Stubbs<sup>3</sup> has invented enamelling oil paintings,<sup>4</sup> and it looks as if he would succeed—not that our painters will adopt it. They are as obstinate as mules or farmers. Would they deign to employ the encaustic that Müntz revived in this house?<sup>5</sup>

The exhibition is much inferior to last year's; nobody shines there

15. The *London Gazette Extraordinary* of 23 April reported further successes of Rodney in the West Indies; the *Gazette* of 24 April included a letter from Arbuthnot describing an encounter with a French fleet off Chesapeake Bay on 16 March. The action did not become general, but Arbuthnot thwarted the reinforcement of enemy troops in Virginia. See *Sandwich Papers* iv. 139.

1. Raspe's book purported to offer evidence of the great antiquity of oil-painting. See *ante* 17 Jan. 1780.

2. At the Royal Academy. It opened Monday 30 April (*London Chronicle* 28 April-1 May 1781, xlix. 416).

3. George Stubbs (1724-1806), animal-painter and anatomist; associate R.A., 1780; elected R.A., 1781, but the election was annulled when he refused to present a diploma work to the Academy. His picture, 'Two Horses; in enamel,' was No. 17 in the exhibition (Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy*, 1905-6, vii. 297).

4. His experiments in enamel had begun in 1770 and were encouraged and assisted by Josiah Wedgwood. Stubbs finally succeeded in obtaining nineteen tints of vitreous colour. Walter Shaw Sparrow describes and evaluates his enamel paintings in *George Stubbs and Ben Marshall*, 1929, pp. 24-7.

5. See *ante* 18 April 1777.

but Sir Joshua and Gainsborough.<sup>6</sup> The head of the former's Dido is very fine—I do not admire the rest of the piece.<sup>7</sup> His Lord Richard Cavendish<sup>8</sup> is bold and stronger than he ever coloured. The picture of my three nieces<sup>9</sup> is charming. Gainsborough has two pieces with land and sea,<sup>10</sup> so free and natural that one steps back for fear of being splashed. The back front of the Academy<sup>11</sup> is handsome, but like the other to the street, the members are so heavy that one cannot stand back enough to see it in any proportion, unless in a barge moored in the middle of the Thames.

Darby has relieved Gibraltar: the Spanish fleet ran into their burrows,<sup>12</sup> as if Lord Chatham were still alive. I shall not be surprised if the King of Spain signs a separate peace: what can France say for abandoning him thus? they miss such gross opportunities, that I cannot but think their ministers take pensions like our members of Parliament.

6. 'The collection of the present year is enriched with some admirable pieces of our greatest masters, but upon the whole is much inferior to that of the last and of several preceding years, there being more indifferent paintings admitted than the Royal Academicians ever before suffered to disgrace their exhibition. . . . The best paintings in the rooms, are those of Sir Joshua, and Gainsborough' (*London Chronicle* 28 April–1 May 1781, xlix. 416).

7. A contemporary pamphlet entitled *The Earwig*, possibly written by Mauritius Lowe (W. T. Whitley, *Thomas Gainsborough*, 1915, pp. 175–6), said of Reynolds's *Death of Dido* (No. 160 in this exhibition) that it 'calls for a criticism . . . more severe than any of his pictures have ever merited,' but admitted that 'the face of Dido is beautiful' (Algernon Graves and W. V. Cronin, *A History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1899–1901, iii. 1147).

8. Lord Richard Cavendish (1751–81), second son of the 4th D. of Devonshire; M. P. Lancaster 1774–80, Derbyshire 1780–1 (Collins, *Peerage*, 1812, i. 360). There are two very similar portraits of Lord Richard by Sir Joshua Reynolds, one belonging to the Duke of Devonshire, the other to the Duke of Portland. The former was exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1781, No. 182. HW noted in his catalogue of the exhibition (now *penes* Lady Sybil

Grant): 'One of Sir Joshua's very best and most highly coloured portraits; he did another of them with variations, and, I think, still finer.'

9. The painting commissioned by HW (*ante* 28 May 1780).

10. Gainsborough had three landscapes in the exhibition, Nos 77, 94, 426. Of No. 94 a contemporary critic (unidentified) wrote: 'The clouds seem in motion, the waves to be retiring from the beach, and the fishing boats really float on the waves' (Whitley, *op. cit.* 176). HW noted on No. 426 in his copy of the catalogue, 'Some parts very fine' (Graves, *op. cit.* iii. 192).

11. That part of the still unfinished new Somerset House which faces the Thames. See *ante* 19 May 1780, n. 10.

12. 'Yesterday morning [4 May] dispatches were received at the Admiralty, from Vice-Admiral Darby, containing the agreeable advice of his having sent safe into Gibraltar 72 transports laden with provisions, ammunition, and stores, on the 8th of April . . . [and] that as soon as he received intelligence of the garrison being relieved, he stood away with his whole fleet for Cadiz, off which port he arrived the 14th, during the Spanish fleet to come out; an invitation Don Cordova did not seem inclined to comply with when the dispatches came away' (*London Chronicle* 3–5 May 1781, xlix. 432).

There are published two more volumes of Harris of Salisbury<sup>13</sup>—paltry things indeed! He dwells on Aristotle's old hacked rules for the drama and the pedantry of a beginning, middle and end. Harris was one of those wiseacres whom such wiseacres as himself cried up for profound—but he was more like the scum at the top of a well.

When I was talking of the Academy, I should have told you, that Barretti has printed a catalogue of its ornaments and plaster casts.<sup>14</sup> He takes occasion to inveigh against Brutus for taking off Cæsar<sup>15</sup>—and this Italian slave will be approved by more than Cæsar.

Do you know that I am in great distress? my *Mysterious Mother* has wandered into the hands of booksellers,<sup>16</sup> and has been advertised with my name without my knowledge; like a legislator I have held out both rewards and punishments<sup>17</sup> to prevent its appearance, but at last have been forced to advertise it myself<sup>18</sup>—but unless the spurious edition appears, I shall keep it back till everybody is gone out of town, and then it will be forgotten by the winter.<sup>19</sup> I intend too to abuse it myself in a short advertisement prefixed.<sup>20</sup> It is hard

13. James Harris, the author of *Hermes*. See *ante* 21 Jan. 1774 and n. 11. His *Philological Inquiries in Three Parts* was noticed in *Critical Review* June 1781, li. 401–7. HW's copy was sold SH v. 70.

14. Publication of Barretti's *Guide through the Royal Academy* was announced in the *London Courant* 30 April 1781.

15. Barretti alludes to the statue 'at the foot of which Cæsar was murdered by Brutus and his other republican comrades, who did not reform the world by that assassination, but deluged it with blood, and brought themselves to an untimely end by the vanity of their grand schemes' (*Guide*, pp. 13–14).

16. HW learned this from John Henderson, the actor (HW to Henderson 16 April 1781).

17. 'May I take the liberty of asking you, if you think it could be stopped? I should be willing to pay for my folly' (HW to Henderson, *loc. cit.*). The threatened punishments were presumably lawsuits.

18. 'Speedily will be published by the author (to prevent spurious editions which have been advertised without his consent) *The Mysterious Mother*, a Tragedy. Printed for J. Dodsley in Pall

Mall' (*Public Advertiser* 30 April 1781). No advertisements of 'spurious editions' have been found.

19. HW was successful in forestalling the unauthorized publication. Dodsley had *The Mysterious Mother* printed (HW to Conway 28 May 1781 and *post* 3 July 1781) but never published it. HW presented copies of this printing to some of his friends. See *post* 22 May 1781 and Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 82–3.

20. The 1781 printing contains the following prefatory note (pp. v–vi), dated 29 April 1781: 'The author of the following tragedy is so far from thinking it worthy of being offered to the public, that he has done everything in his power to prevent the publication—in vain. It is solely to avoid its being rendered still worse by a surreptitious edition, that he is reduced to give it from his own copy. He is sensible that the subject is disgusting, and by no means compensated by the execution. It was written several years ago; and to prevent the trouble of reading it, or having it transcribed, a few copies were printed and given away. One or two have been circulated, and different editions have been advertised, which occasion the present publication. All the favour the author solicits or expects, is, to be believed

that when one submits to be superannuated, it is not permitted; at first I had a mind to add your magic alterations, which in the compass of ten lines makes it excusable—but then I thought it would look like wishing to have it brought on the stage as it might be. If I do publish it I shall like with your leave to print your alterations hereafter,<sup>21</sup> for I think them as I said performed by a *coup de baguette*,<sup>22</sup> and that nothing is a greater proof of your superiority. Pray send me another copy, for in moving from Arlington Street to Berkeley Square I mislaid them, and cannot find them directly,<sup>23</sup> though I saw them but last year, and have treasured them up so safely, as I did Gray's *Candidate*,<sup>24</sup> that I don't know where they are.

From MASON, Tuesday 15 May 1781

Printed from MS now wsl.

Aston, May 15th, 1781.

**I** RECEIVED your last letter on my return from York, where I had been on a committee to meet our delegates.<sup>1</sup> It is not worth while to trouble you with anything on that subject, nevertheless I cannot help telling you that the meeting was numerous and respectable, no whit appalled by their ill success,<sup>2</sup> and determined to

how unwillingly he has submitted to its appearance: he cannot be more blamed than he blames himself for having undertaken so disagreeable a story, and for having hazarded the publicity by letting it go out of his hands. He respects the judgment of the public too much to offer to them voluntarily what he does not think deserves their approbation.'

21. Mason's alterations (see *ante* 8 May 1769) were first printed by Montague Summers in his edition of the play, 1924.

22. HW said this *ante* 11 Oct. 1778.

23. He found them later (*post* 3 July 1781).

24. HW reported this loss and recovery *ante* 16 Sept. 1774.

ably Samuel Shore, 1738–1828, of Norton Hall, co. Derby, and Meersbrook, near Sheffield, J.P.; cf. Burke, *Landed Gentry*, 1868, p. 1367), and Sir James Norcliffe (earlier Innes, and later Innes-Ker) (1736–1823), 6th Bt (Innes), 1762, 5th D. of Roxburgh, 1805 (confirmed in claim to title, 1812). Their report to the Yorkshire Association was presented at York 9 May 1781 (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 328–42).

2. The deputies reported that 'they were not encouraged to recommend an application to Parliament . . . for notwithstanding the approbation of some of the best and wisest men of this country, a disposition favourable to this plan of Parliamentary reformation did not sufficiently appear. . . . To all our most experienced friends, it seemed advisable to postpone that arduous task to a more favourable, but they trust, not a very distant season' (Wyvill, *op. cit.* i. 339).

1. The Yorkshire delegates sent to London to meet and deliberate with the deputies of other associations for Parliamentary reform (*ante* 29 March 1781) were Christopher Wyvill, Samuel Shore (prob-

persist in the same constitutional efforts. Their voice will be heard one time or other.

I am really sorry that your tragedy is likely to be made public in the clandestine way you mention. The booksellers, I believe, have an opinion that a book once printed, and only given to friends, is in fact published; this the Scotch bookseller Murray declared to be law in his abusive letter to me.<sup>3</sup> And therefore as I believe it is now fourteen years since you printed it you cannot claim it as property.<sup>4</sup> But hold—why say believe? when I can be sure by looking at the title? Oh! I find you printed it in 1768, so the term is not elapsed and so my fine argument goes for nothing. However, I return where I set out to say that I am sorry, because I really think that on account of one defect, which might easily have been rectified,<sup>5</sup> you will find it not only criticized but censured. I distinguish between these two matters. Criticism, I believe, you as well as I can bear with much sang-froid. But to be *censured* for having drawn human nature worse than ever it appeared in the world, is what I think neither of us would bear with complacency. And this I fear will be the case. For could the story in general be proved true,<sup>6</sup> the invented circumstance which you have introduced to palliate the Countess's guilt<sup>7</sup> will make the reader recoil more than even the fact itself. I frankly own to you that it had this effect upon me, and therefore it was that I presumed many years

3. See *ante* 26 May 1777. The advertisement prefixed to the separately published Book II of *The English Garden* remarks that the 'author printed a certain number of copies of this second book last year, to give to his friends.' Later, before publishing the book, Mason entered it at Stationers' Hall to protect his copyright, but Murray argued that the private printing constituted a first edition, and cited the law to the effect that the entering of a book at Stationers' Hall after the publication of a first edition does not give the author property rights (*A Letter to W. Mason*, 1777, pp. 6–7 and 10).

4. The 14-year copyright term during which 'the author and his assigns shall have the sole liberty of printing and reprinting his works' was established by the statutes of 8 Anne c. 19 and 15 Geo. III c. 53 (2 Blackstone 408).

5. By adopting Mason's alterations (*ante* 8 May 1769), in which he represents the mother's incest as unwitting.

6. HW believed 'the story founded on an event in real life' (Postscript to *The Mysterious Mother*). For HW's continuing interest in analogues of the story see *ante* 23 Feb. and 7 Oct. 1778.

7. 'In order to make use of a canvas so shocking, it was necessary as much as possible to palliate the crime, and raise the character of the criminal. To attain the former end, I imagined the moment in which she had lost a beloved husband, when grief, disappointment, and a conflict of passions might be supposed to have thrown her reason off its guard, and exposed her to the danger under which she fell. Strange as the moment may seem for vice to have seized her, still it makes her less hateful, than if she had coolly meditated so foul a crime. I have endeavoured to make her very fondness for her husband in some measure the cause of her guilt' (Postscript, in *Works* i. 126).

ago to send you my sketch of an alteration. You liked it at first, and was afterwards led to reject it by the opinion of a friend,<sup>8</sup> which opinion was formed on an absolute misconception. I own I was sorry for this, at the time, and I am more sorry now, not (as I hope you will do me the justice to believe) from any predilection for the little I did, but from strong conviction that something ought to be done, in this way, to fit it even for the closet. I put the stage totally out of the question, for though very few plays I believe would act finer, could actors be found equal to it, and if the guilt were softened; yet I had not this in my consideration, because you had declared to me your resolution of never bringing it on the stage, and therefore what I did was merely for the sake of having its great merit in point of contrivance, costume, pathos, character, etc., thoroughly allowed by the reader, who I was afraid would find his moral feelings revolt as mine had done from that circumstance, and therefore not give that approbation which was justly due to the parts, from that one capital blemish in the whole. This it was which induced me to take the liberty I did with you, at a time when I could not boast that I had so much of your friendship as I verily believe I have at present. I really then thought it *hasardé* yet I could not refrain from doing it, because I wished that a play of so much merit might be freed from a fault which appeared to me so striking and which I thought I saw might be done by so slight a remedy, for the alteration so little affects the plot and characters, that it does not even affect Lady Di's drawings.<sup>9</sup> If it did, I know you would reject it without mercy; for I firmly believe you value them more than the work they belong to. But this is a digression.

After teasing you so long on this subject I will only add that I have two copies of the tragedy, one given me by you, the other left me by Mr Gray. In one of these<sup>10</sup> I have inserted my alterations, which I will bring up with me the latter end of June,<sup>11</sup> for I really meditate a visit to you as soon as my diocesan has executed his visitation. Here the two words are precisely used as they are in Soame Jennyns's *World*,<sup>12</sup> but be not afraid, my visit will only be a *vis*,<sup>13</sup> for I shall

8. No such intervention is mentioned in the letters on the subject.

9. Described *ante* 18 Feb. 1776.

10. The copy (now wsl) described in the preliminary note, *ante* 8 May 1769.

11. The visit did not take place until

July or August. See *post* 3 July and 9 Sept. 1781.

12. 'When a gentleman or lady intends taking a family dinner with a country friend, or a dish of tea with a town one, I would have that called a *visit*. But when

have a hundred others to make in the month which I allot for this southern expedition. In August I am tied neck and heels to my York residence.

I have but just now received Raspe's book. Many thanks to you for it, from what I have seen I think it very curious; the other book in defence of Milton against Johnson (which I believe also comes from you<sup>14</sup>) is only a republication of what was published in the *Memoirs of Hollis*.<sup>15</sup>

Believe me, dear Sir,

Most faithfully yours,

W.M.

To MASON, Tuesday 22 May 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 184-6.

May 22, 1781.

I AM pleased that you think seriously of making me a visit soon, but you might have retrenched the comfort you hold out of its being a very short one. As you come as seldom as a comet, I should not have been alarmed, if you intended to stay as long. My publication<sup>1</sup> shall certainly not precede your arrival. I can scarce even call that delay a compliment, having already suspended its appearance. In short my advertisement<sup>2</sup> prevented the spurious editions, and I flatter myself I am forgotten, at least I have gained time, and at worst will

a person proposes spending some days, weeks, or months at a house, I would call that a *visitation*' (*The World*, No. 62, 7 March 1754). The essay on visiting is not among Jenyns's contributions to *The World* included in the collected editions of his works.

13. 'When a fine gentleman chooses to signify his intention of making a short visit . . . I am for an abridgment of the word, and only calling it a *vis*' (*The World*, No. 62).

14. Mason was mistaken. See *post* 22 May 1781.

15. Francis Blackburne's *Remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton*, printed in 1780 for private circulation, had already appeared in his *Memoirs of Thomas Hollis* ii. 533\*-584\*. See W. P. Courtney and David Nichol Smith, *A Bibliography of Samuel Johnson*, 1915, p. 137.

1. Of *The Mysterious Mother*.

2. I.e., the newspaper advertisement (*ante* 6 May and n. 18).

publish in July or August, when all the world is dispersed, and I can trust the fickleness of the age for not recollecting in winter what passed after the prodigious interval of three months. Should any national calamity happen, no incredible event, I will turn the ill wind to private good, and steal out, while the consternation lasts.

Your objection to the play, I allow to be fully just, and I know fifty others, but don't imagine I will correct anything, no, that would show predilection and partiality to it; partiality I have, but it is to your corrections, and it shall have none other, I have said the truth: I think your alterations marvellous, and it is favourable to the tragedy, that it could produce your alterations and Lady Di's drawings; you shall have the full honours of yours, for first or last they shall stand by themselves in your name. I have no jealousy, I allow your full superiority, and will always avow it, and have more pleasure in the fame of my friends than appetite for it myself. As to *The Mysterious Mother* being acted I am perfectly secure, at least while Lord Hertford is Lord Chamberlain,<sup>3</sup> nay, whoever should succeed him I think would not license it without my consent; but enough on a subject of which I am sick and weary, and yet I have nothing to replace it.

It was not from me, I assure you, that you have received any defence of Milton, nor do I know anything of it, but what you tell me, that it is in the *Memoirs* of Hollis. Boswell that quintessence of busybodies, called on me last week,<sup>4</sup> and was let in, which he should not have been, could I have foreseen it.<sup>5</sup> After tapping many topics to which I made as dry answers as an unbribed oracle he vented his errand—'had I seen Dr Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*?' I said slightly, no, not yet,<sup>6</sup> and so overlaid his whole impertinence—as soon as he could recover himself, with Caledonian sincerity, he talked of Macklin's new play,<sup>7</sup> and pretended to like it,<sup>8</sup> which would almost make one suspect that he knows a dose of poison has already been

3. HW alludes not only to Hertford's friendship but also to his prudishness.

4. Boswell did not record this meeting in his journal, but it may have been one of his unspecified visits on 18 May (*Boswell Papers* xiv. 228).

5. In 1766 HW had tried, unsuccessfully, to avoid a meeting with Boswell in Paris (*ibid.* vii. 60–1). In 1788 Boswell recorded a visit to HW, when he found him 'just the same as ever: genteel, fastidious, priggish' (*ibid.* xvii. 102).

6. Not an altogether accurate statement, since HW had certainly seen the earlier volumes (see *ante* 19 Feb. 1781). That he had not seen vols v–x, including (in vol. x) the life of Gray, was probably true. See *ante* 27 Jan. 1781, n. 10.

7. *The Man of the World* (originally titled 'The True-Born Scotchman'), first acted at Covent Garden 10 May 1781 (*Genest* vi. 196). HW's copy (now WSL) was the 1793 edition, the fourth.

8. Despite Macklin's satirical treatment







SNUFF-BOX WITH WAX PORTRAIT OF TONTON

administered; though by the way I hear there is little good in the piece, except the likeness of Sir Pertinax<sup>9</sup> to twenty thousand Scots.

You will find that I have gotten a new idol, in a word, a successor to Rosette<sup>10</sup> and almost as great a favourite, nor is this a breach of vows and constancy, but an act of piety. In a word, my poor dear old friend Madame du Deffand had a little dog of which she was extremely fond, and the last time I saw her she made me promise if I should survive her to take charge of it.<sup>11</sup> I did. It is arrived and I was going to say, it is incredible how fond I am of it, but I have no occasion to brag of my dogmanity. I dined at Richmond House t'other day, and mentioning whither I was going, the Duke said, 'Own the truth, shall not you call at home first and see Tonton?' He guessed rightly. He is now sitting on my paper as I write—not the Duke, but Tonton.

I know no public matters but what the newspapers tell you as well as me. Darby is come home,<sup>12</sup> but Gibraltar is in a manner destroyed by the Spanish bombs.<sup>13</sup> The Dutch fleet is hovering about, but it is a pickpocket war and not a martial one, and I never attend to petty larceny. Adieu!

## TO MASON, Thursday 14 June 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 186–8.

Strawberry Hill, June 14, 1781.

**Y**OU may imagine perhaps that because I am within reach of the dust of Hyde Park and of the dirt of Westminster, I might send you letters brim-full of news every week. I scorn your supposes. I am as ignorant as truth itself of anything worth telling you; the

of the Scots, Boswell really did like the play, which he saw 15 May: 'Drove to Covent Garden and got in time to the pit and was much entertained with Macklin's new comedy' (*Boswell Papers* xiv. 223). Boswell arranged to have Tom Davies introduce him to Macklin, and the three spent a convivial evening at the Shakespeare Tavern on 31 May (*ibid.* 236–8).

9. Sir Pertinax MacSycophant, an avacious and scheming Scot, the chief character in the play, acted by Macklin.

10. HW's 'tanned black spaniel,' which died in Oct. 1773. HW composed a

rhymed epitaph on her death, which he sent to Lord Nuneham 6 Nov. 1773. The 'new idol,' Tonton, attained the age of 16 and died in 1789 (*BERRY* ii. 265).

11. Mme du Deffand bequeathed HW not only the dog but also a snuff-box with his image in wax (*DU DEFFAND* iv. 2, 5, v. 201 and n. 6). See illustration.

12. 'Admiral Darby arrived yesterday at 12 o'clock at his house in Cavendish Square, after having brought in the fleet safe to their moorings' (*London Courant* 23 May 1781).

13. Three-quarters of the town was reported destroyed by the Spanish bombard-

newspapers, like scavengers, collect all the ordures of Parliament, and retail them to dung the country, and you may have them like other chapmen. What can I tell you? That Lord Cornwallis has conquered his troops out of shoes and provisions, and himself out of troops:<sup>1</sup> or that the heroic Governor Johnstone was so enraged at Captain Sutton's cowardice<sup>2</sup> that he waited three hours to let him recover his spirit, and so lost the French fleet?<sup>3</sup> Pray excuse my being the historian of such prowess, I should as soon admire Mr Cumberland's *successful* negotiations in Spain, where he stayed begging peace till Gibraltar was battered to the ground.<sup>4</sup> I hope he will write an ode himself on the treaty he did not make, and like Pindar fill it with the genealogy of the mule on which he ambled<sup>5</sup> from the Prado to the Escorial, and when I am a mule I will read it.

I have been reading another courtier's book, Sir Richard

ment (*ibid.*). For an account of the damage see John Drinkwater (later Bethune), *A History of the Siege of Gibraltar, 1785* (new edn, 1905).

1. News of Cornwallis's victory over Greene's superior forces at Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina, on 15 March 1781, reached England in May, but the reports that arrived in early June revealed the costliness of the victory. Cornwallis was 'in want of provisions and clothes, and his army . . . was now reduced, excepting his detachments, to 1600' (*Last Journals* ii. 364). 'Such was the penury and miserable state of the country, that the troops were without bread for two days that they continued at Guildford; nor could even forage be procured at a nearer distance than nine miles' (*Annual Register*, 1781, xxiv. 71).

2. Evelyn Sutton (d. 1817), of Screveton, Notts; captain in the navy, 1771; Rear-Adm. (superannuated), 1794 (GM 1817, lxxxvii pt i. 644; Robert Beatson, *A Political Index to the Histories of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1806, ii. 46; *Navy List* 1816). During the naval battle with the French off Porto Praya harbour, Santiago, Cuba, 16 April 1781, when Johnstone ordered a pursuit of the withdrawing enemy, Sutton, commanding the *Isis*, refused to follow on the grounds that his ship was too badly damaged. On 22 April 1781 he was put under arrest, but the absence of Johnstone's squadron on an

East Indian cruise delayed his court-martial until Dec. 1783, when he was given an honourable acquittal. He thereupon instituted civil suits against Johnstone because of the unnecessary hardships he had been subjected to. After much litigation from 1784 to 1787 the suits were disallowed (*Minutes of the Proceedings at a Court-Martial . . . for the Trial of Captain Evelyn Sutton*, 1784; *The English Reports*, 1900, i. House of Lords i. 427-43; 1909, xcix. King's Bench Division xxviii. 1215-46, 1377; Thomas Pasley, *Private Sea Journals 1778-1782*, ed. Rodney M. S. Pasley, 1931, pp. 295-302; *Annual Register*, 1784-5, xxvii. 208; 1786, xxviii. 212; 1787, xxix. 205). The DNB (*sub* Johnstone), following John Charnock, *Biographia navalis*, 1794-8, vi. 503-5, mistakenly reports that Sutton's suits against Johnstone were upheld in the House of Lords.

3. Johnstone's account of the action was printed in the *London Gazette Extraordinary* 8 June 1781.

4. Cumberland's recall from his unsuccessful secret mission to Spain (*ante* 24 Aug. 1780 and n. 4) was dated 14 Feb. 1781. He received it 11 March and left Madrid 24 March 1781 (*Memoirs of Richard Cumberland Written by Himself*, 1806, pp. 405 and 413-5; S. F. Bemis, *The Hussey-Cumberland Mission and American Independence*, Princeton, 1931, pp. 96-7).

5. Cumberland brought six Portuguese

Worseley's *History of the Isle of Wight*.<sup>7</sup> It is dedicated to the King, and to himself too, for I see no reason for his writing it, but to call himself *Right Honourable*,<sup>8</sup> and to celebrate his family, and indeed they have made a great figure there; one of them having been commissioned to search for Queen Elizabeth's hawks,<sup>9</sup> which, however, it does not appear that he found, or I suppose he would have been made *Right Honourable* too.

I have been rather more entertained by an *Essay on Hunting* by a Mr Beckford,<sup>10</sup> who puts me in mind of the country squire<sup>11</sup> who was hunting as the battle of Edgehill was going to be fought;<sup>12</sup> an instance of philosophic indifference in the height of a civil war, unparalleled till the present age. Pray do not imagine that I think anecdotes of painting a jot more patriotic than anecdotes on hunting; if Mr Beckford is of my opinion he holds it in vain to say a serious word to the present generation. I came hither on Saturday for the summer, and you will find me as idle and trifling as if the last *Gazette* had announced the victory of Ramillies,<sup>13</sup> in short an Englishman after Lord Mansfield's own heart, and insensible to my country's ruin. Adieu.

PS. I direct this to Aston, though I am not sure but you may be *concioning ad clerum* at York.

## From MASON, ca Saturday 30 June 1781

Missing.

mules with him into Spain. Early in his stay in Madrid he fell from one of his mules and suffered a broken arm (*Memoirs*, pp. 336 and 363). HW is probably thinking of Pindar's second Pythian ode, in honour of the winner of a chariot-race, in which there is a passage giving the lineage of the Centaurs.

7. The dedication is dated 4 June 1781. The book was reviewed in the *Critical Review* July and August 1781, lii. 1-8 and 118-25. HW's copy was sold SH v. 54. For a note on Worsley see *ante* i. 488 n. 17.

8. The style of address to which Worsley was entitled by virtue of his membership in the Privy Council.

9. Appendix No. lxxxv is a 'warrant to Richard Worsley, Esq., Captain of the Isle of Wight, and al. to search for Queen Elizabeth's hawks in the Isle of Wight, which were stolen,' dated 6 June 1564.

10. Peter Beckford (1740-1811). Publication of his *Thoughts on Hunting, in a Series of Letters to a Friend* was announced in the *London Courant* 31 May 1781. HW's copy is now wsl.

11. Sir Richard Shuckburgh (1596-1656).

12. This was one of HW's favourite anecdotes. See COLE ii. 75 and MONTAGU ii. 277.

13. The village in Belgium where Marlborough defeated the French in 1706.

## TO MASON, Tuesday 3 July 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 188–9; the last paragraph, omitted by Mitford and first printed in Toynbee, is printed from Mitford's transcripts of omitted passages, Add. MSS 32563 fol. 51–2 (complete letter in Toynbee xii. 18–19).

Strawberry Hill, July 3, 1781.

IT would be very dissonant, from my impatience to see you, if I had suffered anything to interfere with my readiness to receive you the moment you are ready to come to me. You will find me alone from this instant to your arrival, and for as long afterwards as you will stay with me—yes, quite alone, unless you persuade Mr Stonhewer to accompany you, which would make me still happier.

I have found your emendations of *The Mysterious Mother*, but as to inserting them in the text it is now impossible, for the whole impression was printed off in a week after it was delivered to Dodsley,<sup>1</sup> as I then thought I should scarce be able to get the start of the spurious edition. Luckily my advertisement stopped that, which shows it was an interested job, and perhaps I may be able to avoid publishing at all; if I must, I shall certainly beg your leave to add your emendations. I told you at first most sincerely that I think they are as full proof of your genius as you ever gave, and I shall not selfishly stifle them to avoid severity to myself. My play has been already so public, that I can never totally suppress it; it is said to be printing in Ireland;<sup>2</sup> nay, I think it will be more to my honour to adopt your corrections than not, as to own one's errors is some merit,—but enough of this.

I wrote my letter last night and had sealed it, but open it again to tell you that if you should be arrived by Friday,<sup>3</sup> and ready to come to me, you would find some company that day who propose to dine with me, of which I received notice this morning. I give you this notice that you might not think I deceived you. Do send me a line be-

1. It was printed by 28 May 1781 (HW to Conway 28 May).

2. As HW wrote to Conway, loc. cit. Nothing seems to have come of the advertised Irish edition. In 1791 a Dublin edition appeared with HW's reluctant permission. See Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 83.

3. Mason wrote to Harcourt from

Curzon Street on Saturday 7 July 1781, 'I wish to have a letter from you before I set out for Nuneham. . . . I must go to Strawberry Hill on Monday, if a dose of rhubarb which I am to take tomorrow will remove a certain complaint under which I now suffer' (MS in the possession of Viscount Harcourt). Mason presumably made his visit on 9 July or shortly thereafter.

forehand when I shall see you, that I may not even be engaged to dine out.

Your metropolitan is an impudent blackguard,<sup>4</sup> but I would not have his punishment merely temporary. I had rather you would set him in a kennel of your own rhyming for him,<sup>5</sup> than have him sit in the pillory at York, where his infamy will be more transient than even at Fleet Ditch. Your abuse will outlive not only the present incorrigible time, but even the tyranny that is meant to be entailed on us. Lucan, far your inferior, outlived the whole succession of Roman Emperors, and will survive the popes too, and then my Lord of York will flutter on his gibbet in chains, as well as Julius Cæsar, while Yorkshire remonstrances will have no more readers than my Lord Clarendon's long-winded memorials,<sup>6</sup> which even Dr Bagot, and Lord Bagot,<sup>7</sup> and Bishop Butler and Sir Roger Newdigate skip or doze over. Good night!—Come.

## TO MASON, Thursday 16 August 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 190–1.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 16, 1781.

**D**ON'T you think in the case of correspondence that it is worse to adhere to the letter of a promise than to break it? You desired me to write to you, but you certainly did not wish I should if I had nothing to say, yet I keep my word most conscientiously, lest you should think me negligent, though I have not a tittle to tell you. I have heard nothing public or private, but of the ball at Windsor on the Prince's birthday,<sup>1</sup> and I trust you do not care a straw about that,

4. Markham's particular offence was probably described in a letter from Mason now missing, ca 30 June 1781. It was presumably committed in his charge to his diocesan clergy, discussed *post* 19 Sept. 1781 and n. 4.

5. Mason does not appear to have complied with HW's suggestion, but three months later, after another sermon by Markham, Mason wrote a satirical letter for the *London Courant* (*post* 1 Oct. 1781).

6. Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, the chief fault of which, according to HW, was its 'laboured justification of King

Charles' (*Royal and Noble Authors, Works* i. 387).

7. Sir William Bagot (1728–98), 6th Bt, 1768; cr. (1780) Bn; Dr Bagot's brother.

1. '15th [Aug. 1781]. A great ball at Windsor on the birthday [12 Aug.] of the Prince of Wales. The Duke of Cumberland was there, though he had been at neither [ball] at the Queen's House; but it was supposed he was now invited to please the Prince, over whom he had great influence' (*Last Journals* ii. 371).

any more than I do. The Monarch and his son sail to the Nore today to see Parker's fleet,<sup>2</sup> and I suppose that Parker's fleet may see them, and what then?—I protest my imagination cannot suggest a single reflection on such events; I might as well tell you what I had for dinner. What indeed does the present vast scene speak but that four or five great nations may be at immense expense and be a prodigious while doing nothing?—yes, and that one of those nations at least can amuse itself in the mean time with the details of a hop, and the circumstances of a scuffle,—don't tell me, the world is grown an old fool, and the *Memoirs of P.P.*<sup>3</sup> will be as important as the history of the present age. If I did anything myself, I should think it as much worth sending you as the journal of Europe—but alas! like other sovereigns, and consequently like Harlequin when he sat on a throne and was asked, *Que fais-tu là, Harlequin?* I answer, *Mais je règne.*<sup>4</sup> At most, by my *de par le roi*, I have printed Mr Jones's ode,<sup>5</sup> and have a painter<sup>6</sup> making drawings for the description of my house and collection<sup>7</sup>—and with my own royal hand I have been preparing a new edition of my *Painters*<sup>8</sup>—

These are imperial works and worthy kings.<sup>9</sup>

If you say no, tell me what they do better. Oh! but the Emperor?<sup>10</sup> why he is running about and sowing sayings, that are to be cited by

2. It had recently returned to the Nore after an engagement on 5 Aug. with a Dutch squadron, reported in a *London Gazette Extraordinary* of 9 Aug. 1781 and much cried up because, although Parker had but seven ships against the enemy's eight, the Dutch retired.

3. Pope's *Memoirs of P.P., Clerk of This Parish*, first published in 1727 in Motte's *Miscellanies*, ii. 268–84. The *Memoirs* satirize triviality in biographical writing.

4. Possibly in *Arlequin empereur dans la lune* (ante 17 Sept. 1778, n. 7), although it is not in the version printed in *Le Théâtre italien de Gherardi*, Amsterdam, 1701, i. 113–65.

5. *The Muse Recalled, an Ode Occasioned by the Nuptials of Lord Viscount Althorp and Miss Lavinia Bingham, Eldest Daughter of Charles Lord Lucan, March VI, MDCCLXXXI.* '11 August 1781. Finished 250 copies of Mr Jones's Ode. . . . Mr W. Jones of Queen's Ox-

[ford] was the translator of some Eastern poetry' (*Journal of the Printing-Office* 19). Jones (who belonged to University, not Queen's College) had been Lord Althorp's tutor.

6. Edward Edwards (1738–1806), A.R.A. For a further note on him see COLE ii. 274.

7. The *Description of the Villa*, first printed in 1774, and enlarged, with plates, in 1784 (Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 105–8 and 123–4). Nearly all of Edwards's drawings for the 1784 edition are now WSL.

8. The third edition of the *Anecdotes of Painting*, with additions, was published in 1782.

9. Pope, *Moral Essays* iv. 204.

10. Joseph II at this time was visiting the Low Countries. Much was made of the visit; the London newspapers printed many stories about him, and in some quarters there were high hopes that he would bring about a peace between England and her continental foes. The Duke



Diderot and D'Alembert<sup>11</sup>—however I am mistaken if he turns out anything but an ape of the King of Prussia.

I have received from Brightelmstone a long card in verse, from Mr Hayley to Mr Gibbon,<sup>12</sup> inviting Livy to dine with Virgil—but it is not worth sending you—nor do I know anything that is; if you do, good now, send it to me.

## TO MASON, Sunday 9 September 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 191–3.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 9, 1781.

THE dead calm, which occasioned such a paucity of my letter[s], seems to be thoroughly at an end, for some time. It was but a *grim repose*.<sup>1</sup> Gibraltar is besieged,<sup>2</sup> Minorca besieged,<sup>3</sup> New York I believe, besieged<sup>4</sup>—and I am sure Great Britain is besieged. Forty-seven or nine French and Spanish ships of the line at the gates of the Channel, and Admiral Darby with only twenty-two in Torbay,<sup>5</sup> is

of Gloucester had recently called on the Emperor at Bruges (HW to Mann 5 July 1781).

11. The Emperor fancied himself a *philosophe*.

12. 'A Card of Invitation to Mr Gibbon, at Brighthelmstone' was printed in Hayley's *Poems and Plays*, 1785, i. 179–80.

1. This phrase from Gray was a favourite of HW's; he uses it *ante* 16 Nov. 1779 and 9 June 1780.

2. Gibraltar had been blockaded since 21 June 1779, though both Rodney and Darby had succeeded in running the blockade and relieving the garrison (W. M. James, *The British Navy in Adversity*, 1926, pp. 188–95; *ante* 28 May 1780 and 6 May 1781).

3. 'Advices from Madrid say that the Duc de Crillon [Louis de Berton des Balbes de Quiers (1718–96), Duc de Crillon and later Duc de Mahon, French general who in 1758 entered the service of Spain] is investing Minorca; he has with him 9800 chosen troops of Spain' (*London Courant* 7 Sept. 1781). Minorca capitulated 4 Feb. 1782.

4. 'Yesterday an express arrived at the Admiralty from New York, which left that place the 30th of July. The friends of government give out that it has brought nothing new; but the fact is, Sir Henry Clinton has expressed the most alarming apprehensions for the safety of that place. . . . The express also adds, that Sir Henry Clinton had collected together all the troops he could possibly muster within the town, and had found himself under the disagreeable necessity of recalling the greatest part of the detachments, with which he had reinforced Lord Cornwallis' (*London Courant* 8 Sept. 1781). Washington later abandoned his plan to attack New York.

5. The combined fleets, consisting of forty-nine ships of the line, had escorted the expedition against Minorca through the Straits of Gibraltar, and then turned northward to the Channel. Darby had had early reports of the fleets' activity, but his force was so inferior that he anchored in Torbay and awaited instructions (*Sandwich Papers* iv. 10–14, 50–67; *Last Journals* ii. 372).

a blockade to some purpose. The wind however has ruffled the trenches of the latter,<sup>6</sup> and driven them from their station, and they have also lost a 74-gun ship.<sup>7</sup> But unless this warning reminds them of the approaching equinox, it is probable that they will return to their post for another fortnight. This is the prevalent opinion; I do not tell you that it is mine, for I have none. I have long found that I do not shine at conjectures. I have guessed right about nothing but that the storm would come at last. I shall go on to tell you what others think, or say they do. It is supposed that the Jamaica fleet, worth four millions, is the immediate object<sup>8</sup>—and no trifling one! Some think an attempt will be made to burn the stores at Cork,<sup>9</sup> what should hinder? or other attacks on the coast! If I divined intentions, it would be that France is willing to put an end to their own expense in the war, and after exhausting us so long, will force the most unopening eyes in the universe to give up the frantic vision of recovering America, I am sure we must if we would save anything.

This is the sum total of what I can learn; matter enough to dissert upon if such were my propensity! but besides not loving talkation,<sup>10</sup> it is painful to me to write. A finger of my right hand has opened with an explosion of chalk-stones; five have come out, and it is still big with another. I have nobody to dictate to, for my printer-secretary is gone into Warwickshire.

I have received your fourth book,<sup>11</sup> and give you many thanks; you may receive as many more for your Fresnoy whenever you please, and ten thousand more for anything I have *not* seen—I am not afraid of giving YOU *carte blanche* for any bill you will draw on me.

6. HW would seem to mean the former, i.e., the combined fleets.

7. Confirmation of this story has not been found. There were conflicting rumours about the combined fleets, including reports of their dispersal by the wind (*London Courant* 7 and 8 Sept. 1781). Actually, the fleets separated and made for their respective ports on 5 Sept. (*Sandwich Papers* iv. 14).

8. This was the general belief, and seems to have been true, according to documents printed in *Sandwich Papers* iv. 50–62 and the newspapers of early September. But the Jamaica fleet did not arrive in English waters until long after the

departure of the combined fleets (*ibid.* iv. 14).

9. 'Yesterday [7 Sept.] in the afternoon an express arrived . . . from Londonderry, with advice that a large fleet of ships were hovering on that coast, and seemed to be steering towards Corke; they were supposed to be part of the combined fleets of France and Spain' (*London Chronicle* 6–8 Sept. 1781, l. 240).

10. OED calls this a nonce-word, but missed HW's use of it, the first illustration being dated 1800.

11. Of *The English Garden*, published 1 Sept. (*London Chronicle* 30 Aug.–1 Sept. 1781, l. 215).

Though this is but my second letter,<sup>12</sup> remember it is twice as many as I have received from you—and you have not a lame finger. With the dowager life I lead, it is marvellous that I can write anything but tittle-tattle and scandal, but happily, as my memory is on the wane, I remember nothing of that sort. It is true I perceive more serious flaws, but is it lamentable to decay, when one has survived the glory of one's country? My wishes are limited now to peace—I care not what sort of peace—the longer it is deferred, the worse it must be; only boyish gamesters flatter themselves, that a good run can retrieve a fortune that is lost, and only idiot gamesters believe in luck against calculation—gamesters we are: distress and disgrace have had no effect, we play on against those who have shown they will risk nothing. Is this credible of a whole nation? you perhaps still think that a whole nation may be corrected. I do not. Burn their cards and dice, and perhaps when they are cool they may come to their senses—at least their children whom they will leave beggars will think of earning an honest livelihood—however, those are speculations for those who amuse themselves with peeping into futurity. I have almost done with time, and only sigh for a few hours of tranquillity.

From MASON, Wednesday 19 September 1781

Printed from MS now wsl.

*Address:* The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

*Postmark:* YORK 22 SE.

York, Sept. 19th, 1781.

Dear Sir,

**I** AM always an epistolary culprit and shall be I fear to the end of the chapter. Nevertheless I can now plead some excuse, for ever since I have been here I have been in a perpetual hurry and bustle, Harcourts, Holdernesses, and Conyers<sup>1</sup> for visitors of quality, and of gentry myriads besides. This added to cathedral business, Justice of Peace business, etc., has kept me in a continual ferment. Yet in the midst of this I found time to write and to preach a sermon which

12. HW probably counts from Mason's visit, mentioned *ante* 3 July 1781.

1. That is, Lady Conyers and her husband, John Byron.

would have frightened you had you heard it. You may guess what it was about by its text, viz. 'Yet Michael the *archangel* when disputing with the devil durst not bring against him a *railing accusation*, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee."'<sup>2</sup> Miss Fauquier who heard me as well as Lord Harcourt, gave me high commendations, and indeed I have the vanity to say that it wanted nothing but her *exterminating eyes*<sup>3</sup> to make it all it should be. What will be the consequences I cannot yet guess, but I suspect the convocation will be summoned to meet upon it.<sup>4</sup> In the mean time like the nation with the combined fleet at the chops of the Channel I remain (as you say) in a grim sort of repose, till our first-rate ecclesiastical man-of-war<sup>5</sup> returns from his northward visitatorial cruise; and then I know not whether he will give me a broadside or no. If he does, it may afford me matter for a longer letter.<sup>6</sup>

Lord Harcourt I fancy has by this time got home and I hope received benefit from his Harrowgate expedition, though he is not yet certain about it. He expects you at Nuneham and I hope you will not frustrate his expectation.<sup>7</sup> Pray tell me in your next whether Sir Joshua Reynolds be returned from Flanders, for I want to write to

2. Jude 9.

3. Mason echoes HW's lines quoted *ante* 1 Nov. 1780.

4. 'In the course of last summer the Archbishop made his visitation throughout his diocese, and, as is usual, gave a charge to his clergy. This charge, among other matter, contained a direct attack upon the associating part of the clergy, in which his Lordship did not indeed condescend much to reason with them upon their conduct in any other manner than by pointing out their folly in being so blind to their own interest and preferment—but he did not scruple, in pretty plain terms, to call them *men foremost in mischief, and factious clergymen*, a character which he held out as the most contemptible in existence. . . . A reverend gentleman, as much distinguished in the literary world, as he is remarkable for his steady adherence to the principles of the constitution . . . took a text from the General Epistle of Jude, ver. 9. . . . His sermon contained a full vindication of

himself and the rest of the associated clergy from the aspersions thrown upon them in the charge. His Lordship has been perfectly silent upon the subject ever since' (*London Courant* 15 Nov. 1781). The associating clergy were defended by 'An Independent Freeholder of Yorkshire' in some 'Remarks' on Markham's charge, reprinted in *The Remembrancer* 1781, pt ii. 239–43, from 'one of the county papers.' This essay resulted in a satirical print (one of many in which Markham figured), 'A—bp Laud Charging His Clergy,' published 1 Jan. 1782 (BM, *Satiric Prints* v. 557).

5. Markham.

6. On 1 Oct. 1781 Mason wrote to Alderson: 'The Archbishop, as you predicted, took no notice of my sermon at our interview yesterday; it was however apparent from his manner, as well as that of his chaplain, that he had heard of it.'

7. HW did not make the visit. See *post* 9 Oct. 1781.

him.<sup>8</sup> If I were to beat my brains to pieces I cannot find at present more to say than that I am

Yours very heartily,

W. M.

TO MASON, Tuesday 25 September 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 195-7.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 25, 1781.

I DID guess that you was combating the evil one and had no time to answer idle letters. Nay, but I am glad that you have erected altar against altar and attacked the Priest of Baal in his own high places. Still I hope you will find a moment to pay your *lay-debts* too, especially as posterity will call on you for that liquidation, which said posterity will certainly never hear of your metropolitan's charge to his clergy; and which he had better have given in bad Latin like Bishop Butler's *Concio ad clerum*,<sup>1</sup> and then neither the dead Romans nor his own Westminster scholars<sup>2</sup> would have understood it. Soame Jennyn's *Ode on Odes*, and Johnson's *Life of Gray* are still unchastised. Apropos have you seen the Doctor's character of Warburton in his *Life of Addison*?<sup>3</sup> it is ten times more like to himself

8. Reynolds, accompanied by his friend Philip Metcalfe, left London 24 July 1781 on a visit to the Netherlands to examine Dutch and Flemish pictures. The diary of the excursion and some letters written during it by Reynolds are printed in C. R. Leslie and Tom Taylor, *Life and Times of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1865, ii. 329-38. Reynolds returned to London 16 Sept. 1781 (Frederick W. Hilles, *The Literary Career of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, Cambridge, 1936, pp. 70-3; *post* 20 Dec. 1781). The only letter from Mason to Reynolds that has been printed is dated 25 Aug. 1776 (*Letters of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, ed. F. W. Hilles, Cambridge, 1929, pp. 243-4). Reynolds wrote to Mason in March 1782 (*post* 10 March 1782). On Mason's intimacy with Reynolds see Hilles, *Literary Career*, pp. 81-3.

1. John Butler, *Concio ad clerum in synodo provinciali Cantuariensis provincie ad d. Pauli, die xx<sup>o</sup> januarii, A.D. MDCCCLXXV*, 1775.

2. Markham had been headmaster of Westminster School 1753-65.

3. Warburton is not characterized in the *Life of Addison*; HW doubtless has in mind the following passage in the *Life of Pope*: 'Warburton . . . was a man of vigorous faculties, a mind fervid and vehement, supplied by incessant and unlimited inquiry, with wonderful extent and variety of knowledge. . . . To every work he brought a memory full fraught, with a fancy fertile of original combinations, and at once exerted the powers of the scholar, the reasoner, and the wit. But his knowledge was too multifarious to be always exact, and his pur-

than to the Bishop, and expressed in the same uncouth phrases which he satirizes.

Yes, be assured I shall go to Nuneham: I wait for my summons, and delay my visit to Park Place<sup>4</sup> on that account that I may kill two journeys with one stone; for I grow very thrifty of my travels as I advance in years, and do not like to waste unnecessary hours on the road.

I know no more news than if it was my duty to have intelligence. I heard a minister t'other night joking on the equinoctial winds which would send the combined fleets packing;<sup>5</sup> how *comical!* I mean their being here. Neptune they say is to have a pension like Lord Dunmore for having lost his government.<sup>6</sup> There is a new epigram that came to my hand t'other day:—

O England, no wonder your troubles begin  
When blockaded without and *block-headed* within.<sup>7</sup>

I cannot resolve you whether Sir Joshua Reynolds is returned or not. Is your Fresnoy to remain in embryo till he writes notes on it? and how does it want notes? I met with a thought of Voltaire t'other day that pleased me, though not at all to the purpose of what I was saying. He is declaring against the possibility of translating poets, and asks whether *music can be translated?*<sup>8</sup> Your Fresnoy is no exception, for you have translated his prosaic verses into poetry. I wish you do not translate his Grace of York to Canterbury! Atter-

suits were too eager to be always cautious. His abilities gave him an haughty confidence which he disdained to conceal or mollify, and his impatience of opposition disposed him to treat his adversaries with such contemptuous superiority as made his readers commonly his enemies. . . . He used no allurements of gentle language, but wished to compel rather than persuade. His style is copious without selection, and forcible without neatness; he took the words that presented themselves: his diction is coarse and impure, and his sentences are unmeasured' (Johnson's *Prefaces*, 1779–81, vii. 164–6).

4. HW went to Park Place 11 Oct. (*post* 9 Oct. 1781). Nuneham is about twenty miles from Park Place.

5. The combined fleets had actually dispersed three weeks before the date of this

letter. See *ante* 9 Sept. 1781 and n. 7.

6. Of Virginia. See *ante* 21 Dec. 1775 and 12 Feb. 1778.

7. HW wrote the epigram himself. It appears in the MS of *Last Journals* (where HW signed it with his initials) and in *A Note Book of Horace Walpole*, ed. W. S. Lewis, New York, 1927, p. 15, where it is headed by HW 'On the combined fleets of France and Spain off Scilly Sept. 1781.' He concealed his authorship not only from Mason but also from Lady Ossory, to whom he sent it 12 Sept. 1781.

8. A similar passage, possibly the one HW had in mind, begins: 'La poésie est une espèce de musique: il faut l'entendre pour en juger' (*Lettres philosophiques*, *Œuvres*, ed. Moland, xxii. 169). See also xiv. 145.

bury<sup>9</sup> said in his controversy with Wake,<sup>10</sup> 'Many a man has been written out of character into preferment.'<sup>11</sup> It is the sort of martyrdom that great churchmen do not wince at. Adieu!

PS. I desire to see your sermon.

From MASON, Monday 1 October 1781

The letter and its enclosure are printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: TADCASTER 4 OC.

York, Oct. 1st, 1781.

Dear Sir,

**I** SEND you the enclosed very hastily scribbled, which I shall be very much obliged to you, if you will correct and get fairly transcribed and afterwards sent as soon as may be to Mr J. Stockdale,<sup>1</sup> bookseller in Piccadilly, by the penny post. I would wish it to appear in the *London Courant* as soon as possible.<sup>2</sup> I would not give you this trouble were there anybody in town that I could apply to at present, but as you are yourself my 'old friend' at the *Smyrna*<sup>3</sup> I hope you will not fail me.

Yours, etc.

Add this postscript:

For greater certainty it may be well to mention his Grace's text. 2 Corinth., 10 chap. 5 verse: Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself, against the knowledge of God.

Pray stop it carefully.<sup>4</sup>

9. Francis Atterbury (1662-1732), Bp of Rochester 1713-23; leader of the high church party in England until he was deprived of his see and offices because of his Jacobite sentiments.

10. William Wake (1657-1737), Bp of Lincoln, 1705; Abp of Canterbury, 1716.

11. 'And the experience of later times than his has showed, that it is possible to write a man out of reputation, into preferment' (*The Rights, Powers, and Privileges of an English Convocation, Stated and Vindicated. In Answer to a Late Book of Dr Wake's, Entitled, The Authority of Christian Princes over Their Ecclesiastical*

*Synods Asserted*, 1700, 'Preface,' sig. b4).

1. John Stockdale (ca 1749-1814), bookseller and publisher. He seems to have taken over the management of the *London Courant* 6 Feb. 1781, when for the first time his name replaced that of John Almon in the notice for correspondents. His address as given in the notice was 'opposite Burlington House, in Piccadilly, London.'

2. The letter was printed in the *London Courant* 24 Oct. 1781.

3. See below, n. 8.

4. A comparison of the text in the

[Enclosure.]

To The Printer of the *London Courant*.

Grantham, Oct. 1st, 1781.

Mr Printer,<sup>5</sup>

IN my way from a tour to the Lakes I stopped at York to take a view of its magnificent cathedral, which indeed more than answered the superb accounts I had heard of its structure. It was last Saturday in the afternoon, and having heard from the verger who attended me, that the Archbishop was to preach the next day from his throne, I was induced to stay another morning to be present at the ceremony.

This custom of preaching from the throne it seems has been introduced by the present metropolitan, all his predecessors having delivered their discourses from the common pulpit; in doing which, though they might perhaps do a favour to the ears of their audience, they certainly did not consult their own dignity; for a throne and an archbishop seem to be so strictly united in what one may almost call the *nature of things*, that they ought never to be put asunder.—But this only by the way. As to myself, a stranger and in my boots and surtout, I made no scruple of mingling with the herd of his auditors and stood so near the said throne that I lost not a syllable of the discourse.

It was delivered with all that dignity which results from slow and solemn recitation,<sup>6</sup> and its subject the government of the passions—it is not my purpose to analyse the whole: I only shall mention one single sentence, and that for a reason which I shall after give you.<sup>7</sup>

Speaking of the ill effects of ambition, or as his Grace phrased it, of a desire of pre-eminence, he laid it to the charge of the highest ranks 'that they wasted God's creation and spilt the blood of millions and that merely for a name, which yet they did not always at-

*Courant* with Mason's MS shows that HW or his amanuensis (or possibly the printer) inserted a large number of commas and made a few other changes in punctuation. Two or three words were altered ('recollect' for 'recollected,' 'whosoever' for 'whoever').

5. The text in *London Courant* reads 'Mr Miller': i.e., John Miller (*ante* 23 March 1774, n. 15).

6. 'I am very much persuaded that his [the Archbishop's] sermon was that very identical one which he preached at Court last Lent, about which I bade you inquire. . . . On the whole it was a very dull discourse, and more dully delivered than written' (Mason to Alderson 1 Oct. 1781).

7. Mason first wrote, 'for my own particular satisfaction.'



tain.' Now I recollected that some Sunday in the course of last spring, calling in at the Smyrna Coffee-House,<sup>8</sup> I met an old friend (now gone abroad) who told me that he was just come from St James's Chapel where he had heard a sermon preached by this same Archbishop on the same subject; he moreover quoted the passage above in nearly the same words.<sup>9</sup> This therefore made me prick up my ears in expectation of another passage about charioteering, which my friend had also quoted to me<sup>10</sup> from the same discourse, but here I was disappointed, and as that sentence was now omitted,<sup>11</sup> I began to doubt concerning its identity. This doubt still remains with me and therefore as I cannot have early satisfaction from my absent friend, I write to you, Mr Printer, hoping that if you will please to insert this letter, some person who heard the sermon at Court, will be kind enough to tell me whether I was right or wrong in my first surmise.

I remember the gentleman at the Smyrna, who is a deeper politician than I am, seemed to think that in the two instances of ambition and charioteering *more was meant than met the ear*,<sup>12</sup> and that his Grace disliked the American war almost as much as he did high phaetons, which (though I did not agree with him at the time) I now suspect to be the case: for as he retained the one instance and expunged the other, it now seemed as if he thought the former even the worst of the two; in which sentiment I certainly have the honour to agree with him. I know it may be said that as there are no young and royal charioteers in or about York, that instance was not for his purpose and was therefore omitted. But here let me ask who is there in or about York that have willingly been instrumental in wasting God's creation and spilling the blood of millions? In short, Mr Printer, I am in a puzzle about the matter, and only know this, that if his Grace still thinks with his brethren of the upper house of Convocation,<sup>13</sup> that the American war is a just and necessary war, it was

8. In the days of the *Tatler* it was opposite Marlborough House in Pall Mall, but by 1769 it had removed to St James's Street (*Boswell Papers* viii. 86, 91, xvi. 129; H. C. Shelley, *Inns and Taverns of Old London*, Boston, 1909, pp. 226-8), where it became noted as a gathering place for politicians.

9. See *ante* 14 April 1781.

10. HW did not quote the passage, but said that Markham 'satirized the ambition of being an expert charioteer,' apparently referring to the Prince of Wales.

11. Markham 'turned over two pages in which I suspect was that passage concerning charioteering which offended the Prince' (Mason to Alderson, loc. cit.).

12. 'Where more is meant than meets the ear' (Milton, *Il Penseroso*, l. 120).

13. I.e., with the bishops. On the constitution of Convocation see Sir William R. Anson, *The Law and Custom of the Constitution*, ed. A. Berriedale Keith, 1935, ii. pt 2. 258.

rather impolitic in him to introduce a sentence into this sermon which might tend to make his Yorkshire audience doubt about his sentiments; especially when he knows that there are at least six thousand in the county<sup>14</sup> who are firmly of an opinion that God's creation has been wasted and that the blood of millions has been spilt, for a nominal pre-eminence on that continent which is neither attained nor likely ever to be attained.—But if on the other hand the great prelate is convinced that the said war is unjust and unnecessary, then I dare say the said six thousand will be proud to put his name at the head of their Association as being firmly persuaded that whoever has the spirit to tell our rulers such a truth and the eloquence to convince them of it, will, by putting an end to this cursed contention, deserve a civic wreath which though seldom seen there, would be a very becoming additional ornament to a mitre.

A Traveller.

## To MASON, Tuesday 9 October 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 201–2.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 9, 1781.

**I** SHALL do what you desired tomorrow,<sup>1</sup> it was impossible sooner. This is the substance of my letter: the rest will be garnish; for though I have been robbed on the highway, I should not have thought it important enough for a dispatch on purpose. Lady Browne<sup>2</sup> and I, going to the Duchess of Montrose<sup>3</sup> here at Twickenham Park on Thursday night, as we often do, were robbed by a single horseman within few yards of the park gate. She lost a trifle, and I nine guineas; but I had the presence of mind before I let down the glass to take out my watch and put it within my waistcoat under my arm. The gentleman, for so I believe he was, declared himself much obliged,

14. Members and supporters of the Yorkshire Association.

1. I.e., send Mason's 'Traveller' letter to the *London Courant*.

2. Frances Sheldon (1714–90), m. (1) (1736) Henry Fermor (d. 1747); m. (2) Sir

George Browne (d. 1754), Bt; HW's neighbour at Twickenham ca 1766–85.

3. Lady Lucy Manners (ca 1717–88), m. (1742) William Graham, 2d D. of Montrose. After Lady Blandford's death in 1779 the Duchess of Montrose's villa at Twickenham Park was the chief rendezvous of HW's circle of ladies.

pulled off his hat, wished us good night, and I suppose will soon have leave to raise a regiment.<sup>4</sup>

I go to Park Place the day after tomorrow, but think I shall not proceed to Nuneham. I have not heard from Lord Harcourt, but Mr Stonhewer called here a few days ago and says the house is pulled to pieces,<sup>5</sup> and consequently in great disorder, which I conclude is the reason of my not being summoned.

All the papers say Lord Richard Cavendish is dead,<sup>6</sup> I was scarce acquainted with him, nor ever heard anything but good of him. My not knowing yet whether his death is true, shows you what an awkward angle we live in, and how little we hear; we are forced to be robbed now and then at our own doors, that we may have a paragraph that we can call our own. Adieu.

## TO MASON, Wednesday 7 November 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 202-3.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 7, 1781.

**I**F great countries ever owned a defeat or *Gazettes* ever spoke truth, you would conclude by that of last night that the royalists in America have had shining and solid success under a person formerly called one Arnold, but who has plainly shown himself two Arnolds.<sup>1</sup> This *Gazette* has been gleaned and new boiled from amidst a heap of disasters that were brought over on Saturday by Colonel Conway<sup>2</sup> express from Sir Henry Clinton, and which have transpired from other letters, or from the soap-boilers<sup>3</sup> themselves. Two regiments<sup>4</sup>

4. For HW's opinion of the competence of men of wealth and high rank to raise regiments for the Crown, see *ante* 22 March and 24 Aug. 1780. A fuller account of the robbery is given in HW to Lady Ossory 7 and 17 Oct. 1781.

5. During extensive renovations, mentioned *ante* 8 Aug. 1780 and *post* 8 July 1782.

6. 'It is reported that an express is arrived in town with an account that Lord Richard Cavendish, brother to the Duke of Devonshire, died at Naples about the 12th of September last' (*London Chronicle* 4-6 Oct. 1781, I. 336). The report was true.

1. The *London Gazette* of 3-6 Nov. 1781 printed Benedict Arnold's account of his burning New London, Connecticut, on 6 Sept. 1781.

2. Hon. (after 1793, Lord) Robert Seymour-Conway (1748-1831), 3d son of Lord Hertford; Lt-Col. 1775-81 (*Army Lists*); M. P. Orford 1771-84 and 1794-1807, Wootton Bassett 1784-90, Carmarthenshire 1807-20. See R. A. Austen-Leigh, *The Eton College Register, 1753-1790*, Eton, 1921.

3. The ministerial party.

4. 'General Arnold had made a descent on New London, which he destroyed with a great number of privateers . . . but had

even of the victorious expedition under double Arnold have been cut to pieces by the Americans,—the latter, you know never fight.

The town says from various letters which came over on Saturday too, but not one of which to be sure the *Gazette* has seen,<sup>5</sup> that Lord Cornwallis is in a most desperate position, and had provisions but for a month, that we have lost two or three frigates, that the French have landed some thousand men, have been joined by eight men-of-war, of the line, and are superior to our fleet by eleven or twelve ships.<sup>6</sup> The stocks who have not such command of countenance as the *Gazette* are low-spirited.

This is all the hearsay I know. I came to town this morning to attend the rehearsal of Mr Jephson's play,<sup>7</sup> but I do not write prologue or epilogue<sup>8</sup> as the newspapers say;<sup>9</sup> and shall return to Strawberry on Saturday.

I hope your commission was executed to your satisfaction. It was not my fault that it was not performed immediately.<sup>10</sup>

When will your residence end? when do you return to your flocks two-legged or four-legged? and when shall you leave them and come southward?

lost nearly two regiments in the encounter and a great many brave officers' (*London Courant* 5 Nov. 1781).

5. 'It is no wonder that the contents of last night's cloudy *Gazette* [3-6 Nov.] should not have been forwarded to the public view in an *extraordinary* publication, or that the space of three days should have been employed in garbling, lopping, abstracting, separating, dressing, colouring, and preparing the minds of the people for the reception of so lamentable a promulgation of evil tidings as the final blow of separation from our American colonies' (*London Courant* 8 Nov. 1781).

6. All of this was reported in the *London Courant* 5 Nov. 1781.

7. *The Count of Narbonne*, first acted 17 Nov. 1781 at Covent Garden (Genest vi. 221) and published the same year. HW's copy of the play is in the Merritt-Walpole collection in the Harvard Library; his copy of the Dublin edn, 1781, is now wsl. The plot is based on HW's *Castle of Otranto*. HW had begun some months earlier to help Jephson bring his play to the stage, as we learn from HW to Henderson 18 July and 26 Aug. 1781.

8. Two prologues and three epilogues were written for Jephson's play. The author's prologue was actually spoken, but his friend Luke Gardiner had also written one, which arrived too late to be used at the first presentation. It was printed with Jephson's in the Dublin edition (HW to Edmond Malone 22 Dec. 1781). The epilogue spoken on the first two nights was written by Richard Jocelyn Good-enough at the request of Harris. Thereafter the epilogue used was that written by Malone (*post* 13 Nov. 1781, HW to Lady Ossory 15 and 22 Nov., HW to Malone 23 Nov.; *London Courant* 24 Nov. 1781). Jephson also wrote an epilogue, but HW dissuaded him from having it spoken (HW to Jephson 21 Nov. 1781).

9. It was reported in the *London Courant* of 30 Oct. 1781 that HW was writing the epilogue.

10. Although Mason's letter to the *London Courant* was not printed until 24 Oct., a note in the issue of 12 Oct. said it had 'come to hand.'

## FROM MASON, Friday 9 November 1781

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: YORK 12 NO.

York, Nov. 9th, 1781.

I AM as usual an epistolary culprit or rather in a state of insolvency; and you I suppose will have no literary dealings with me till you cannot help it, that is till some more important news from America than Arnold's depredations makes you write whether you will or no. In the mean time having got a sort of a subject for a letter I shall employ this paper upon it.

A few days ago a clergyman in this neighbourhood who is in a state of real insolvency and who I believe brought himself into it by his own great imprudence, sent me by my printer a black-letter Chaucer of the first edition<sup>1</sup> and an original picture of the poet Drayton;<sup>2</sup> for the book he asked one guinea, for the picture five. As I make no curious collections either of books or of pictures neither of these offers were accepted by me, as charity was out of the case, for his debts are too large and his imprudence too great to make him an object of it; he has *de quoi vivre*, and added thousands would make him only more imprudent. This I only speak from the character I have heard of him, for he is not of my acquaintance. However, as the picture is certainly an original I think it worth while to describe it to you as you may perhaps be either willing to purchase it, or to mention it to some of your friends.

It is on board about the Holbein size of a head, that is something less than life. The drapery black, with a cloak on the left shoulder, a broad ruff, and a laurel crown; the date *etat. suæ 36 anno, 1599*, which, on consulting Grainger<sup>3</sup> I found answered exactly to his time

1. It is not clear what edition Mason means. Richard Pynson published in 1526 the first crude attempt at a collected edition of Chaucer, and in 1532 William Thynne published the first collected edition with any claim to completeness. Since the Pynson Chaucer was published in parts without a general title-page, it is probable that Mason is referring to the 1532 edition. See E. P. Hammond, *Chaucer: A Bibliographical Manual*, New York, 1908, pp. 114-18.

2. Michael Drayton (1563-1631). From Mason's account of it this seems to be the picture of Drayton, by an unknown painter, now in the National Portrait Gallery, reproduced as the frontispiece to vol. i of *The Works of Michael Drayton*, ed. J. William Hebel, Oxford, 1931-41.

3. James Granger's *Biographical History of England*, 1769.

of life,<sup>4</sup> though not to the date of his print<sup>5</sup> which was taken from a picture drawn when he was older. It is a sensible countenance and in good drawing, but with little shadow, consequently flat though highly finished. It is in good preservation except a blister or two on the nose, which Beckwith<sup>6</sup> our picture-cleaner here says he could easily cure. He offers to repair the whole for half a guinea and as he is not only a very good picture-cleaner but also a great antiquarian, I am certain he would execute his task *con amore*, or rather with all the care and faithful solicitude of antiquarianity, which, as it is a word of my own coining, and has before had your approbation<sup>7</sup> I hope I may use without being accused of tautology. If this account of the picture induces you or any of your acquaintance to become its purchaser, I shall take care that it be sent to you with all possible punctuality, for I have a sort of veneration for the old laureate,<sup>8</sup> though rather for Selden's sake than his own, because I remember that the lawyer's notes on his *Poliolbion*,<sup>9</sup> helped me to much record [*sic*] its erudition concerning Druidism when I was writing *Caractacus*.<sup>10</sup>

I have (God be thanked) got one quarter's residence almost over, and begin another next Sunday. If I get well through it, I shall then be my own man for a year and three quarters. In hopes of hearing from you soon I slumber in my stall, and with a very dignified yawn conclude myself very faithfully and respectfully yours,

W.M.

4. Granger lists a print by William Hole which was used as a frontispiece to the 1619 edition of Drayton's *Works*. The picture was painted in 1613 when the poet was 50 years old (*Biographical History*, ii. 289).

5. I.e., that mentioned by Granger.

6. Probably Thomas Beckwith (d. 1786) of York, painter; F.S.A. (GM 1786, lvi pt i. 182, 265).

7. Not found in the extant letters.

8. There is no evidence that Drayton ever was poet laureate. Mason may have been misled by the laurel crown in the

portrait he described to HW, but on the other hand he may have been acquainted with the tradition placing Drayton in the line of the laureates. See E. K. Broadus, *The Laureateship: A Study of the Office of Poet Laureate*, Oxford, 1921, pp. 37-8.

9. The first part of *Poly-Olbion*, published in 1612, had notes by John Selden (1584-1654), the jurist and scholar.

10. In his notes to the early editions of *Caractacus* Mason quoted from *Poly-Olbion* and 'the learned Selden' (3d edn, pp. 90, 94).

## TO MASON, Tuesday 13 November 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 205-7.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 13, 1781.

I TRY to answer your letter, though my hand shakes so it is very difficult. I have had the gout in my right these three months, the fourth finger has discharged a shower of chalk-stones which makes me as a genealogist, no otherwise I protest to your priesthood, conclude that I am descended from Deucalion<sup>1</sup> rather than Adam, unless there has been any intermarriage between the two families. A new swelling has come within this week and must be lanced soon, and being very nervous too, any effort in writing makes my hand reel more; but I must thank you for your *Primierà*<sup>2</sup> about the picture of Drayton, though I do not choose to purchase it; I have no room to stick a single head; I am poor too, and I am grown so old that every acquisition seems much dearer to me from the little time I have to enjoy it. Shall I own farther, I do not think all Drayton ever wrote worth five guineas; Dr Johnson perhaps may have installed him in Milton's throne, and the age may have sworn fealty to him, but I am a Tory and adhere to the right line, and will not abjure those I learnt to revere in my nursery, nor will kneel to stocks and stones that the mob are taught to idolize.

I am too, though a Goth, so modern a Goth that I hate the black letter, and I love Chaucer better in Dryden and Baskerville,<sup>3</sup> than in his own language and dress, still my antiquarianity is much obliged to your pimping for it, but the anility-half predominates and will not pay for such a spark as Drayton who is neither young nor vigorous.

Though very unfit for anything at present, and when I say at *present* do not imagine I expect to grow fitter for anything, I am occupied about Mr Jephson's play, have been at one rehearsal,<sup>4</sup> and must if I

1. A son of Prometheus who, with his wife Pyrrha, alone survived the great flood. They were told by an oracle to cast behind them the bones of their mother, i.e., the stones of the earth, which became human beings.

2. Probably an error for *premura*, 'zeal, eagerness.'

3. I.e., in Dryden's adaptations and in modern type. John Baskerville (1706-75), printer and type-founder, did not print either Chaucer or Dryden.

4. On 10 Nov. (HW to Jephson 10 Nov. 1781).

can be at another on Friday;<sup>5</sup> the players I believe thought I was come to act the ghost of the miscarriage in *The What D'ye Call It*;<sup>6</sup> perhaps it may prove so by venturing with the gout into a cold theatre, and then I shall say to them with propriety, 'I owe my death to you! to you! to you!'<sup>7</sup> I could entertain you, were my hand able, with the history of my negotiations with Mr Harris,<sup>8</sup> Miss Young,<sup>9</sup> and how all my finesse was nearly *dérouté* by an Irish head,<sup>10</sup> but I am tired and must wish you good night.

## TO MASON, Monday 26 November 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 207-8.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 26, 1781, late at night.

**I** CAME to town today at two o'clock and found the town in a hubbub on the news of Lord Cornwallis and his whole army being made prisoners,<sup>1</sup> but the speech<sup>2</sup> and two majorities<sup>3</sup> tomorrow will send them all easy again to the opera by night.

I cannot tell you a word more of this mishap than Mr Stonhewer

5. HW attended it and 'compromised the affair of the epilogues' (HW to Lady Ossory 15 Nov. 1781), explained *ante* 7 Nov. 1781 and n. 8.

6. By John Gay; first acted at Drury Lane 23 Feb. 1715 (Genest ii. 551) and published the same year. One of the characters is 'the ghost of a child unborn.'

7. The ghost of the mother of the unborn child says:

'It's mother I, whom you whipped black and blue,

Both owe our deaths to you, to you, to you'

(shaking her head at three other characters)' (I. iv. 11-12).

8. Thomas Harris, proprietor and manager of Covent Garden.

9. Elizabeth Younge (ca 1744-97), actress; m. (1785) Alexander Pope (1763-1835), actor. HW wrote to her 22 Oct. 1781 and persuaded her to play the part of the Countess.

10. I.e., Edmond Malone. An angry letter that he wrote to Harris complaining of the manager's excessive haste in presenting

the play on 17 Nov. was resented by Harris, and HW felt that it was only his tact as peacemaker that prevented an abandonment of the play (HW to Lady Ossory 15 Nov. 1781).

1. '25th [Nov.] A packet-boat . . . brought back a French gazette, with an account of Lord Cornwallis and his whole army having been made prisoners at York Town by General Washington, at the head of the French and Americans. This was soon confirmed by an express from Sir Henry Clinton. . . . This news threw the Court and administration into great confusion and distress. It came on the Sunday, and the Parliament was to open on Tuesday, 27th' (*Last Journals* ii. 378). Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, Virginia, 19 Oct. 1781.

2. The King's speech on opening the new session of Parliament. The text is printed in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 634-7.

3. For the government in both Houses. HW's prophecy was fulfilled (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 679, 751).



has told you, whom I met this evening at Lady Cecilia's,<sup>4</sup> and who has written to you. Mr Macpherson who publishes our daily creed,<sup>5</sup> has been proclaiming that Lord Cornwallis had vowed he would never pile up his arms like Burgoyne.<sup>6</sup> I do not know whether this was to keep up our spirits or not, but it puts the hero in a ridiculous light, which is the way in which heroes are treated of late when they can be no longer of use, it saves rewards.

I have heard nothing else, nor was this repetition worth sending, but it proves I am not negligent.

I have been plagued about Mr Jephson's play—nay I am so still, for though I did prevail on Mr Harris to act it, who had been ill used about it, and on Miss Young to play the mother which she has done to admiration<sup>7</sup>—and though it has succeeded perfectly,<sup>8</sup> the author is dissatisfied. I had four sides last week, and tonight another letter of eight pages<sup>9</sup> to scold me for letting the statue on the tomb be cumbent instead of erect,<sup>10</sup> in short I do not wonder he is a poet for he is distracted—he shall act his next play himself for me.

When you come to town I can show you a thousand curious things, from Mad. du Deffand's papers,<sup>11</sup> but I believe I did mention them

4. Lady Henrietta Cecilia West (1727–1817), m. (1762) Col. (afterwards Gen.) James Johnston; intimate friend of HW's. She lived at Hampton. See BERRY i. 18 n. 27.

5. Macpherson was reported to have been commissioned by the administration to 'supervise' the newspapers in order to prevent as far as possible the publication of political satires. See *ante* ca 22 Aug. 1778, n. 8.

6. At Saratoga, 17 Oct. 1777. On 25 Nov. 1781 HW wrote in his journal, 'The newspapers on the Court side had been crammed with paragraphs for a fortnight, saying that Lord Cornwallis had declared he would never pile up his arms like Burgoyne. . . . He probably had made no such declaration, or if he had, it was not known here' (*Last Journals* ii. 379). HW probably had seen the following, in the *Morning Herald* for 8 Nov. 1781: 'If relief should not arrive before famine makes its appearance, Cornwallis, the greatest military character that America has seen during the present war, must submit to a similar fate, which another Gen-

eral underwent at Saratoga. . . . However, some people who are intimately acquainted with the Earl are of opinion that, if reduced to the sad alternative, he will certainly lose his life rather than submit to the disgrace of piling up his arms!' Further optimistic paragraphs and communications similar to the above appeared in the *Herald* on 12, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 20 Nov.

7. HW praises her in his letter to Jephson 18 Nov. 1781.

8. The play ran for nine successive nights and was acted twenty-one times during the season (Sir James Prior, *Life of Edmond Malone*, 1860, p. 80).

9. Both letters are missing.

10. HW's reasons for permitting the statue of Alphonso to be cumbent are given in his letter to Jephson 21 Nov. 1781. At Jephson's insistence the position of the statue was later changed (HW to Jephson 3 Dec. 1781).

11. Madame du Deffand had bequeathed her papers to HW (HW to Thomas Walpole 26 Oct. 1780, HW to Lady Ossory 1 Nov. 1780). Despite all his

before,—when one repeats oneself, it is plain one grows old or has nothing to say.

## TO MASON, Wednesday 28 November 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 208–9.

Nov. 28, 1781.

YOU may be unused to horrors, yet if you have read the 10th article of Lord Cornwallis's capitulation, your feelings will bleed afresh. He capitulates for his own person and return, he capitulates for his garrison—but lest the loyal Americans who had followed him should be included in that indemnity, he demands that they should not be *punished*—is refused<sup>1</sup>—and leaves them to be hanged!<sup>2</sup> now his burning towns, etc., becomes a mere wantonness of war—they were the towns of those whom he calls rebels, though he was one of five who protested against the Stamp Act<sup>3</sup>—but these were his friends, his fellow soldiers! could I fill three pages more with news, I would not—what article could deserve to be coupled with so abominable a deed!

## FROM MASON, Sunday 16 December 1781

Printed from MS now WSL.

*Address:* The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

*Postmark:* YORK 19 DE.

*Memoranda by HW:*

If write long enough and dull enough  
Street walker

efforts to prevent it, some of the manuscripts were withheld from him, but a packet of papers, with Madame du Defand's dog, Tonton, had been delivered to him in April 1781 (HW to Thomas Walpole 30 April 1781). For the later history of the papers see DU DEFFAND i. pp. xliii–xlvi.

1. The tenth of the articles of capitulation, stipulating that 'the natives or inhabitants of this country, at present in York or Gloucester [Virginia], shall not be punished for having joined the English army' was refused on the grounds that the treatment of loyalists was 'entirely under the civil cognizance' (*London Courant* 28 Nov. 1781).

2. The loyalists were treated more leniently than HW expected. There were numerous arrests and banishments, but 'throughout the Revolution no person suffered death for treason in Virginia by order of a court or the assembly' (I. S. Harrell, *Loyalism in Virginia*, Durham, North Carolina, 1926, pp. 54–9).

3. Grenville's revenue-raising scheme, passed in 1765, which evoked violent resistance in America. On 10 Feb. 1766 Cornwallis was one of five peers who supported Lord Camden in opposing a resolution that asserted the right of the Crown to tax America (*Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis*, ed. Charles Ross, 1859, i. 11).

Jenkinson's pamphlet<sup>1</sup>

York, Dec. 16, 1781.

I OMITTED one topic for a letter till it was out of date. I should have congratulated you on the success of your son Jephson's tragedy, to which filiation you had certainly as good a claim as Homer had to either of his dramatic bantlings Sophocles and Euripides, but while I was framing a fine period for the purpose, a letter from you stops me by telling me that he is in his lunes.—However I have a topic on my table which shall not be lost comprised in two octavo volumes,<sup>2</sup> which might I think justly be entitled 'Learning in Its Lunes, or the Etymologist<sup>3</sup> Run Mad.' I never in my days so [saw] such a farrago of inconclusive quotation. You I suppose will wonder that I have read it, and reserving yourself for that huger phenomenon of antiquarianity which is shortly to obfuscate the literary hemisphere,<sup>4</sup> will say proudly, as Bishop Dawes<sup>5</sup> did to a lady who asked him if he had seen a late eclipse of the moon, 'No, Madam, but my chaplain did; *I saw the eclipse of the sun.*' I however have paid due attention to this forerunner of dulness, and with pen in hand have marginally noted him almost throughout, and if I live to finish the work am not without my hopes that my copy may one day stand on the same shelf with some of the like scribblings of yours and Gray's pen inserted on the margin of some such like author; a prophecy of my own, full as likely to come to pass as that of Pope's who predicted that Bolinbroke's metaphysics would be placed cheek by jowl between Locke and Malbranche.<sup>6</sup>

As to your political *notitiæ* with which you sometimes favour me, I can only thank you for them. I can send you nothing in return, for what signifies telling you that our county is tending towards a

1. 'Street walker' is unexplained. The other two notes were used by HW when answering this letter, *post* 20 Dec. 1781.

2. Jacob Bryant's *Observations upon the Poems of Thomas Rowley, in which the Authenticity of Those Poems is Ascertained*, in two parts, paged continuously, was published 1 Dec. See *ante* 14 April 1781, n. 8.

3. Bryant's *New System, or an Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, 1774, based on fantastic etymological speculation, is discussed *ante* 23 March and 7 April 1774.

4. Milles's edition of the *Poems . . . by Thomas Rowley* (*ante* 14 April 1781). HW had his copy by 20 Dec. (*post* 20 Dec. 1781). Mason lampooned the book in his *Archæological Epistle*, 1782.

5. Sir Williams Dawes (1671–1724), 3d Bt, 1690; Bp of Chester 1708–14; Abp of York 1714–24.

6. Doubtless Mason's way of saying that Pope admired Bolingbroke as a philosopher. No such statement of Pope's has been found.

meeting,<sup>7</sup> as some of the southern counties are doing.<sup>8</sup> What good will all the county meetings of all England do, against that decided spirit of national ruin which now so successfully operates in all our councils? All is over, completely over; so if you won't read Mr Bryant, read the Dean of Exeter,<sup>9</sup> pick their musty straws of learning and try to kill time and drive away thought. 'Tis the best recipe I can give you or myself except large draughts of Brunswick mum,<sup>10</sup> strong beer or metheglin.<sup>11</sup> So no more at present from your hopeless servant,

W.M.

### TO MASON, Thursday 20 December 1781

Printed from Mitford ii. 210-3.

Dec. 20, 1781.

I SHOULD not have waited for your sending me a topic if I had had anything entertaining or comfortable to tell you. Who would not be worn out by repetition of disgraces, follies, obstinacy and profligate corruption? when tools are converted into heroes, or blunt tools are blamed for the awkwardness of the artificer, are these novel-ties worthy of detail? I am weary of writing such a series of paltry circumstances. The crisis of our total ruin comes on with larger strides, and it seems as if it would arrive without any convulsions of the patient. As to county meetings, I will say nothing on them for several reasons that you know. Managed as they have been, I think they will but sub-divide our calamities and our disunion, and heal neither. I have a more recent reason<sup>1</sup> that I will not tell you till I see you. In truth it were idle to make objections when they, and I

7. The next meeting of the Yorkshire Committee of Association was held 4 April 1782 (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 402).

8. An invitation was extended by the independent electors of the city of Westminster to the 'livery of London, the freeholders of Middlesex and Surrey, and the electors of the borough of Southwark' to meet with them on 20 Dec. 1781 in remonstrance against the administration (*London Courant* 17 Dec. 1781). An account of the meeting was published *ibid.* 21 Dec. 1781.

9. Jeremiah Milles.

10. A German beer 'largely imported into England in the 17th and 18th century' (OED).

11. 'A spiced or medicated variety of mead, originally peculiar to Wales' (OED).

1. HW had come to believe that the Court was hoping for a tumult in order to provide an excuse for suppressing opposition by military force (*Last Journals* ii. 388). He perhaps felt that the reforming associations might provoke such a tumult.

fear everything else is too late. The nation is both insensible and senseless: nor misfortunes, nor dishonour, nor danger can alarm or make it feel. I thought they would: I have been mistaken. I may be so again when I repeat what I have often said, that if ever we do awake the *réveil* will be terrible; for they who have voluntar[il]y been fools, will pretend they have been dupes (which is not true, as the artifices employed were too shallow) and then being angry, they will enrage themselves to prove that for once they are in the right; they will do an infinite deal of mischief in the wrong place, and then out of repentance as much the contrary way. That some others expect a storm is evident, for a few of the most shameless instigators of the American war, are now the loudest against it,<sup>2</sup> and call that apostasy, conviction, though it is solely dictated by the hope of saving their places on a change. The readiest flatterers will always be the first renegades. I dare to say that the soldier who spit in the face of Charles I as he went to his trial,<sup>3</sup> had some years before been the most noisy and officious when on guard at the gate of Whitehall; but such squabbles are nothing to me, and they who have drugged the bowl must drink the dregs.

I have looked into Mr Bryant<sup>4</sup> and dipped here and there into Dr Milles, but without cutting the leaves of the latter.<sup>5</sup> From him one can expect nothing. From the former I did expect ingenuity, but he seems to have neither taste nor ear, and which is stranger, to reason poorly. I have only skimmed his second volume. I cannot wade into all that mass of old English, and bad authors. Any man may convince me if he will but write enough and dully enough, for I had rather believe than read. Both the Dean and Bryant I could see have inverted Chatterton's character, have erected him into a lad of high and haughty honour but deny his wonderful parts.<sup>6</sup> Bryant quotes here and there a wretched distich to prove his hypothesis, and

2. HW is thinking chiefly of Richard Rigby, whose speech on 14 Dec. 'rather went to support Pitt's attack on the war, which Rigby declared he was now convinced he had been wrong in supporting' (*Last Journals* ii. 390; cf. Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 847).

3. The story is in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, Bk xi (1807 edn, vi. 387).

4. The *Observations upon the Poems of Thomas Rowley*.

5. HW later wrote marginalia in his copy (now in the BM) of Milles's *Poems, Supposed to have been Written at Bristol, in the Fifteenth Century, by Thomas Rowley . . . with a Commentary, in which the Antiquity of Them is Considered and Defended*. They are printed in CHATTERTON, Appendix 1, pp. 331-43. See also *ante* 14 April 1781 and n. 7.

6. See, especially, Bryant, *Observations*, pp. 559-64, and Milles, *Poems . . . by Thomas Rowley*, pp. 17-19.

then from some of our miserable old rhymers selects here and there a tolerable couplet. He now controverts the supposition of a third personage, though as I told you last year he himself had chosen that plea,<sup>7</sup> and yet he again gives some of the MSS to one Turgot;<sup>8</sup> but for a specimen of his logic, see what he says of Gray's beautiful stanza where he evidently mistakes the sense of the words themselves and their context:—

Hands that the reins of Empire *might* have swayed.

Yet what were they, says Bryant, but ploughmen and labourers?<sup>9</sup> so says Gray; but does not the word *might* imply that had they had education, they might have been Cromwells! but I am as weary of that controversy, as if it were a political one. There is a curious pamphlet worth your looking into, a letter to Jenkinson;<sup>10</sup> it has made some gross blunders, but goes more to the real point than anything I have seen. Read particularly p. 41, where much is stated in a small compass.<sup>11</sup>

I asked Sir Joshua t'other night if he had done anything towards your notes;<sup>12</sup> he said no, but he had some ideas in his head, though at present he was busy on arranging his own notes taken in Flanders.<sup>13</sup>

7. See *ante* 14 April 1781 and n. 10.

8. An historical Turgot (d. 1115) was prior of Durham and later Bishop of St Andrews. He was also an author. The Turgot mentioned in the Rowley poems, however, is an invention of Chatterton's (E. H. W. Meyerstein, *A Life of Thomas Chatterton*, 1930, p. 109). For Bryant's belief that 'among the MSS of Rowley, there were writings of Turgott' see *Observations*, p. 222.

9. This passage (*ibid.* 478–9) is printed with HW's marginal comment in CHATTERTON 353.

10. *A Letter to the Right Honourable Charles Jenkinson*, 1781. The author of this anonymous pamphlet against the administration, signed 'An Independent Whig' and dated 26 Nov. 1781, was John Almon.

11. '[The people] have been repeatedly promised, what has never been performed: they were promised a revenue from America to ease their burdens; but their own burdens have increased, beyond all example in the same number of

years, and America is lost; together with the inestimable riches, and revenue of a flourishing trade. They have paid greater sums for a navy, than ever were known before; and never had so little benefit from it; the French alone are able to look it in the face. They were told, that their money was safer in the hands of government than in any other security; yet the consolidated stock, which is called the barometer of the funds, is fallen from 90 to 55. . . . No man capable of reflection, can behold these things with indifference; and if the dread of civil commotion, or the effects of a riot, connived at, if not secretly approved by ministers, prevent him showing his disapprobation publicly, they equally extinguish his zeal against the common enemy.'

12. I.e., the notes for Mason's translation of Dufresnoy's *De arte graphica*.

13. Reynold's notes on his visit to the Netherlands were published posthumously in Edmond Malone's first collected edition of Reynold's works, 1797. On the preparation of the notes for publication

I do not want either, but I do want your poem published. Adieu! will you not come this winter?

## TO MASON, Thursday 3 January 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 213-4.

Jan. 3, 1782.

I HAVE seen an 'Ode to Hope' by the Duchess of Devonshire and 'Hope's Answer.'<sup>1</sup> The first is easy, and prettily expressed, though it does not express much. The second is the genteelst sermon I ever saw and by much the best-natured, and the expression charming. The conclusive lines are admirable and the first time I believe that a compliment to a fine lady conveyed a most grave lesson of morality, yet so delicately that it might be read at a ball without shocking a fine gentleman. It is precisely the reverse of *not mentioning Hell to ears polite*.<sup>2</sup> Nay though flattery and poetry, it might be pronounced in the pulpit; all this is such a novelty that I wish for a copy of both, *s'entend*, as the first founds one part of the merit of the second.

I was refreshed by this sight after being stupefied by Dr Milles' wagon-load of notes on Rowley, which I have at last been reading. They have all the dull impertinence of a Dutch commentary, an ostentatious parade of all he knows, to the purpose or not, accompanied with bombast preferences of Rowley to Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Homer, Virgil, etc., etc.<sup>3</sup> I am suffocated, pray let *Hope* give me some comfort. I know nothing else, the war, and the French fleet

see Frederick W. Hilles, *The Literary Career of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, Cambridge, 1936, pp. 73-8.

1. By Mason (see *post* 10 Jan.). Neither poem seems to have been published, nor have copies of them been found.

2. 'To rest, the cushion and soft Dean invite

Who never mentions Hell to ears polite'

(Pope, *Moral Essays* iv. 149-50).

3. HW exaggerates Milles's enthusiasm for the artistic merits of Rowley: cf. *Poems* . . . by Thomas Rowley, pp. 28-9, 51, 114, 121, 135, 162, 361-2. Mason in the

Preface to his *Archæological Epistle* makes use of HW's observation: 'In this eventful moment, therefore, of literary suspense, let not any rash reader presume to say, that I imitate Rowley; for then another will as peremptorily answer, that I imitate Chatterton. And if, on the contrary, he asserts that I emulate Chatterton, the learned personage, whom I address, will be in gratitude bound to prove, that I emulate Rowley; which . . . I should like best, because then I should run a fair chance of excelling Homer, Theocritus, and the best poets of antiquity.' See *post* 10 Jan. 1782.

and the West Indies, and Lord Sandwich, and Lord Cornwallis, are all gone out of town I believe for the holidays.

There is a nightingale-woman I am told, called the Allegranti,<sup>4</sup> who sings so sweetly that Lady Mary Duncan<sup>5</sup> and Lady Mount Edgumbe<sup>6</sup> turn their backs when she warbles, because you know people only hear with their faces and nothing is fit to be heard but Pacchierotti.<sup>7</sup> As I have no ear but in my eyes I shall go to see this Philomel.<sup>8</sup>

Pray write to me for I have nothing to do, and nothing to say: I can still answer letters or questions, but I find I cannot answer them if they are not written or asked: my goose-quill is grown very grey.

### From MASON, ca Monday 7 January 1782

Missing; that Mason wrote it is clear from the following letter.

### To MASON, Thursday 10 January 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 215-6.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 10, 1782.

I AM forced to write to you with Kirgate's pen, for though my right hand is better, the left is totally useless and muffled to above the elbow with my old biennial visitor the gout. As he had out-stayed his term I was in hopes that, like prelatie visitors, he would relax and

4. Teresa Maddalena Allegranti (b. 1754—living 1801), Italian-born soprano. For the success of her first season in London, 1781-2, see Hermann Mendel, *Musikalisches Conversations-Lexicon*, Berlin, 1870-9; Grove's *Dictionary of Music*; HW to Mann 7 Feb. 1782.

5. Lady Mary Tufton (1723-1806), m. (1763) William Duncan, M.D., cr. (1764) Bt; a leader of the musical set. See Frances d'Arblay, *Memoirs of Dr Burney*, 1832, ii. 118-20; *Thraliana*, ed. Katharine C. Balderston, 1942, i. 525-6; BERRY i. 153 n. 44.

6. Lady Mount Edgumbe (see *ante* ii. 43 n. 3) was an accomplished amateur musician.

7. Gasparo Pacchierotti (1740-1821), (*Grove's Dictionary of Music*, 1954, vi. 476), male soprano, patronized by Lady Mary Duncan. According to Fanny Burney, on Pacchierotti's arrival in England Mason volunteered his services in teaching him English (*Memoirs of Dr Burney*, ii. 118). Mrs Thrale mentions Pacchierotti's jealousy of Allegranti (*Thraliana*, loc. cit.). After hearing Allegranti, Fanny Burney remarked that she 'sung very well, but—but—but—oh how has Pacchierotti spoilt me!' (*Diary*, ed. Charlotte Barrett and Austin Dobson, 1904-5, ii. 148).

8. HW had heard Allegranti by 7 Feb. (HW to Lady Ossory 7 Jan. and to Mann 7 Feb. 1782).



relax till he totally forgot me:<sup>1</sup> however, by being dilatory in his returns, I may upon the whole balk him of one progress.

I do not at all believe that there was a grain of partiality in my approbation of your ode:<sup>2</sup> ask the other princes of Parnassus, if I am apt to flatter them more than I do other Highnesses. I shall certainly demand a copy from you,<sup>3</sup> if I cannot get one otherwise, which I don't imagine will be difficult. Lady Jersey gave both odes to Mrs Delany; and though I may see neither of them this month from my confinement, Lord and Lady Harcourt will be in town tonight and to them I shall apply.

It will be no compliment to cede to you Dean Milles's huge book: I have not touched it this week, nor waded through the last hundred pages; you will find that I have scribbled a few short notes here and there in the margin,<sup>4</sup> therefore, don't let it go out of your own hands: but I am in no hurry for it, nor shall probably ever make use of them. Much less will I publish my own pamphlet,<sup>5</sup> which might oblige me to say more; if you will, I am sure I shall be diverted;<sup>6</sup> but as to curing the world of foolish credulity—nothing but a new deluge could effect it, and that for no long period. Nay, would one flap fools and leave the knaves in quiet? however, on some vigil of your nobler anger you may kill flies if you please.<sup>7</sup>

I will send the book to the coach tomorrow, therefore, you will inquire for it about the time of its arrival.

Mrs Delany has lent me another most pleasing work of Mr Gilpin, his essay on forest trees<sup>8</sup> considered in a picturesque light. It is perfectly new, truly ingenious, full of good sense in an agreeable style, and void of all affectation—sad recommendations to such times! con-

1. HW alludes to Archbishop Markham's disregard of Mason's sermon (*ante* 19 Sept. 1781 and n. 6).

2. 'Hope's Answer' (*ante* 3 Jan. 1782).

3. HW received a corrected copy from Mason and planned to print it, with the Duchess of Devonshire's 'Ode to Hope,' but nothing came of the plan. See *post* 14, 24, and 28 Feb. 1782.

4. Printed in CHATTERTON 331-43.

5. *Letter to the Editor of the Miscellanies of Thomas Chatterton*. HW later changed his mind. See *ante* 24 July 1778 and n. 27.

6. Mason must have been meditating his satire on Milles, the *Archæological Epistle*, which he published in the spring of 1782 (*post* 15 March 1782), and had doubtless hinted at his intentions in his missing letter to HW.

7. That is, before attacking Johnson.

8. Gilpin's letter to Mrs Delany of 14 Jan. 1782 may refer to this manuscript essay (*Delany Correspondence* vi. 78-9, 83-5; W. D. Templeman, *The Life and Work of William Gilpin*, Urbana, 1939, p. 231).

sequently I suppose it will not be published.<sup>9</sup> Adieu! I am in pain and tired.

## TO MASON, Thursday 7 February 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 216–20.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 7, 1782.

I EXPECTED that you would at least acknowledge the receipt of Dr Milles; I can tell you that if you will not stir a finger to encourage me, mine grow so very helpless that they will soon resign their pen like more puissant secretaries, and a little more willingly. This fit of mine was very short, not a whole month—what care you? but it has left such weakness and so many chalk eggs that my sufferings are far from eased. The Dean and Mr Bryant are not received with such implicit deference as I concluded they would meet. Many pens are whetting.<sup>1</sup> A Mr Malone<sup>2</sup> has published some strong criticisms on them,<sup>3</sup> but unluckily has attempted humour<sup>4</sup> which is not an antiquary's weapon.

Well! after a fortnight's suspense it is certain that Lord George Germaine is to resign and to be a viscount.<sup>5</sup> Don't imagine that

9. It was published in 1791 under the title of *Remarks on Forest Scenery and Other Woodland Views*.

1. 'You know, I imagine, that Tyrwhitt, Tom Warton, Mr Malone and others have taken up their pens in opposition to the books of Bryant and Mills' (Steevens to Cole 21 Jan. 1782, quoted in COLE ii. 294 n. 2).

2. Although Edmond Malone has figured in the correspondence earlier (*ante* 13 Nov. 1781) in connection with the production of Jephson's *Count of Narbonne*, HW has not mentioned his name, and rightly assumes that Mason will not know who he is. See *post* 10 March 1782.

3. Malone's remarks were originally contributed to the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1781, li. 555–9 and 609–15) under the signature of 'Misopidclerus' (see COLE ii. 291 n. 8), and later, revised and enlarged, were published anonymously as a pam-

phlet entitled *Cursory Observations on the Poems Attributed to Thomas Rowley . . . with Some Remarks on the Commentaries on Those Poems, by the Rev. Dr Jeremiah Milles . . . and Jacob Bryant, Esq.* Malone sent a copy of the second edition (now WSL) as a present to HW; see HW to Malone 4 Feb. 1782 and CHATTERTON 363.

4. Malone at the end of his pamphlet suggested that Bryant and Milles be brought to their senses by being incarcerated in the muniment-room of St Mary Redcliff Church (where the Rowley manuscripts were supposed to have been found) and set to measuring the empty chests and computing the number of parchments of a certain given size they could hold. *The Critical Review*, 1782, liii. 418, also commented on this passage.

5. Germain was created Vct Sackville 11 Feb. 1782 and was succeeded as secretary of state for America by Welbore

*otium cum dignitate* was his own choice, still less his master's;<sup>6</sup> and still less is that a sacrifice to a ruined nation. No, it is a mere cabal, an effort of a faction,<sup>7</sup> whose fears first dictated it. During the recess<sup>8</sup> the Lord Advocate<sup>9</sup> wrote to Lord North that he could not serve any longer with Lord George, and the letter was delivered<sup>10</sup> not unwillingly.<sup>11</sup> The writer hoped to succeed the proscribed.<sup>12</sup> The letter was exceedingly ill received, and Lord George was much pressed to remain;<sup>13</sup> nay, this day sevensnight the Lord Advocate was not spoken to; however as mighty emperors must submit now and then to their janizaries, *Starvation*<sup>14</sup> himself is rewarded for this closet insurrection with the place of treasurer of the navy<sup>15</sup> (£6000 per year)<sup>16</sup> in

Ellis. As early as 23 Dec. 1781 the King had contemplated asking for Germain's resignation (*Corr Geo. III* v. 319). The incompatibility of Germain and Sir Guy Carleton, who was favoured by the King for appointment to the command in America, rather than any fundamental disagreement with Germain's policy, prompted the King's consideration of a change in his cabinet. Lord North was dilatory in his conduct of the arrangements, but his hand was forced by Dundas (*ibid.* v. 326, 332, 339, 359-61, 364; Cyril Matheson, *The Life of Henry Dundas*, 1933, pp. 75-6; W. B. Pemberton, *Lord North*, 1938, pp. 335-8). 'It was intended that, as usual, he [Germain] should be only a baron, but he insisted on the higher step, as he said he would not take place after his aide-de-camp, his secretary, and his advocate, who all now were barons; those were Lord Amherst, Lord Walsingham, and Lord Loughborough' (*Last Journals* ii. 399). A similar but more circumstantial account of Germain's bargain with the King is recorded by Wraxall (*Historical Memoirs of His Own Time*, 1836, ii. 493-6).

6. The King's. HW repeats the substance of this in *Last Journals* ii. 396, but as a matter of fact the King, though well-disposed towards Germain, recognized the necessity of his resignation. See preceding note.

7. Led by Rigby and Dundas (Wraxall, *op. cit.* ii. 458-9, 467-8, 472-7).

8. The House of Commons was adjourned during the Christmas holidays from 21 Dec. to 21 Jan., the House of

Lords from 21 Dec. to 30 Jan. (*London Courant* 21 Dec. 1781).

9. Dundas.

10. To the King. But Charles Jenkinson wrote to the King 3 Feb. 1782: 'I understand that a great deal has passed between Lord North and the Lord Advocate, through Mr Robinson, which, as I apprehend, Lord North has never communicated to your Majesty. . . . The purport as I am informed was that Lord George must be dismissed before the Lord Advocate would consent to come into the House of Commons' (*Corr. Geo. III* v. 359).

11. North was anxious to have Dundas's support in Parliament, but there is nothing in the published correspondence bearing on Germain's resignation to suggest that North desired it. See especially *Corr. Geo. III* v. 336.

12. Dundas was under consideration for the post (*ibid.*, v. 336-8; Matheson, *op. cit.* 76), but HW has probably exaggerated the venality of Dundas's motives. See Matheson, *op. cit.* 75 and Pemberton, *op. cit.* 335.

13. HW was mistaken. See above n. 5.

14. Dundas: explained *ante* 25 April 1781.

15. Dundas was eager for the post and was supported by North in the early stages of the bargaining. But on 5 Feb. the King wrote Lord North that Dundas could have the treasurership only if he would give up his demand for life-tenure of the sinecure Scottish office, which he held only at the King's pleasure, of Keeper of the Signet, to which he had been ap-

the room of old Ellis<sup>17</sup> (*ready for all posts*)<sup>18</sup> who is made secretary of state for late America. Dr Warton<sup>19</sup> will wish himself joy, who in his new volume on Pope<sup>20</sup> had just said that the poet would be happy if he knew that his pleasant villa is occupied by a *man of such virtue, learning, and taste*.<sup>21</sup> I should think not, if one may judge of what he said on much such another transfer of property,—

And Helmsley, once proud Buckingham's delight,  
Slides to a scrivener, or a city knight.<sup>22</sup>

It is very diverting to hear how the courtiers *now* rail at Lord George<sup>23</sup> as if this was the moment of his greatest criminality!—in short, the treachery and the rewards both to the traitor and to the betrayed are of a piece, and constitute no new era.

Anything is preferable to such politics; I am sure two good stories

pointed in 1779: 'I shall certainly not consent to his bearing his great Scotch office for life: I am clear that the trouble he has given this winter is not a reason for my rendering him independent, and great as his desires seem to be, the best English House of Commons office and one of two thousand *per annum* in Scotland during pleasure are no small recompenses, let his merits be ever so great' (*Corr. Geo. III* v. 361–2). Dundas would not accept the treasurership until the formation of Shelburne's ministry in July 1782, when his demands were met.

16. The nominal salary was £2000 (*Court and City Register* 1781, p. 135), but the profits of the office 'especially in wartime, were very considerable' (Robert Beatson, *Political Index*, 1806, ii. 78). In 1782 the salary was raised to £4000 with the purpose of remedying abuses, but the results were not altogether satisfactory (*ibid.* and Matheson, *op. cit.* 107).

17. Welbore Ellis (1713–1802), *cr.* (1794) Bn Mendip; secretary-at-war 1762–5; treasurer of the navy 1777–82; secretary of state for America Feb.–March 1782.

18. The source of this allusion has not been found.

19. Joseph Warton (1722–1800), D.D.; critic; brother of Thomas Warton.

20. The second volume of the *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, the first volume of which had appeared in 1756. HW's copy is now in the BM.

21. 'Our author would have been pleased, if he could have known that his pleasant villa would, after his time, have been the property of a person of distinguished learning, taste, and virtue' (*Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope* ii. 312). On the death of Sir William Stanhope in 1772 Pope's villa passed to Welbore Ellis, who occupied it until his death (R. S. Cobbett, *Memorials of Twickenham*, 1872, pp 285–7; cf. COLE ii. 368 and n. 1).

22. *The Second Satire of the Second Book of Horace, Paraphrased*, ll. 177–8. 'Helmsley, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, came into the possession of the Duke [of Buckingham] in 1657. . . . The house and estates were sold in 1692 to Sir Charles Duncombe, a London banker, for the sum of (it is said) £90,000; this was "the greatest purchase ever made by any subject in England" . . .' (*The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*, vol. iv, ed. John Butt, 1939, p. 69). In his copy of Pope's *Works*, 1743 (now WSL), HW has noted opposite 'City Knight,' 'Sir Charles Duncomb.'

23. On 7 Feb. 1782 the Marquess of Carmarthen, the Earl of Abingdon, and others protested the proposed elevation of Germain to the peerage (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 999–1006). See *post* 14 Feb. 1782 and n. 9.

are: here they are. T'other night at Brooks' the conversation turned on Lord Falkland;<sup>24</sup> Fitzpatrick said he was a very weak man and owed his fame to Lord Clarendon's partiality.<sup>25</sup> Charles Fox was sitting in a deep reverie, with his knife in his hand. 'There,' continued Fitzpatrick, 'I might describe Charles meditating on the ruin<sup>25a</sup> of his country, ingeminating the words, Peace! Peace! and ready to plunge the knife in his own bosom.'<sup>26</sup>—'Yes,' rejoined Hare in the same ironic dolorous tone, 'and he would have done so, but happening to look on the handle of the knife, he saw it was silver, and put it in his pocket.' The other is an anecdote more fit to rank with the former part of my letter. Sir John Hawkins told it to me last Sunday. When Dr Johnson was at work on his Shakspeare, Sir John said to him, 'Well! Doctor, now you have finished your dictionary, I suppose you will labour your present work *con amore* for your reputation.' 'No Sir,' said Johnson, 'nothing excites a man to write but necessity.'<sup>27</sup> This was but the text—now for the illustration. A clergyman<sup>28</sup> told Sir John very lately, that being with Johnson, he said to him, 'Doctor, you have such command of your pen you can do anything: I wish you would write me a sermon.' 'No Sir,' said the mercenary, 'I cannot write but for money; since I have dealt with the heathens (the book-sellers) I have no other inspiration. I knew they could not do without me, and I made them pay five guineas a sheet for my *Rasselas*;<sup>29</sup> you

24. Sir Lucius Carey (1610–43), Kt, 1626; 2d Vct of Falkland, 1633; P.C., 1642; secretary of state to Charles I, 1642–3; killed in the first battle of Newbury.

25. A laudatory character of Falkland appears in the *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, Bk VII (1807 edn, iii. 526–39). HW devoted several pages to him in *Royal and Noble Authors* (*Works* i. 501–3), observing that he 'seems to have been a virtuous well-meaning man with a moderate understanding . . . yet by the happy solemnity of my Lord Clarendon's diction, Lord Falkland is the favourite personage of that noble work. . . . That Lord Falkland was a weak man, to me appears indubitable.'

25a. Previously printed 'his ruin.'

26. 'When there was any overture or hope of peace he [Falkland] would be more erect and vigorous, and exceedingly solicitous to press anything which he thought might promote it; and sitting

amongst his friends, often after a deep silence and frequent sighs, would, with a shrill and sad accent, ingeminate the word *Peace, Peace*, and would passionately profess that the very agony of the war . . . took his sleep from him, and would shortly break his heart' (Clarendon, op. cit., Bk VII: 1807 edn, iii. 538).

27. 'Johnson . . . to the astonishment of myself who have heard him, and many others, . . . has frequently declared, that the only true and genuine motive to the writing of books was the assurance of pecuniary profit' (Hawkins's 'Life of Dr Samuel Johnson,' Johnson's *Works*, 1787, i. 83–4). This may be compared with Johnson's remark quoted by Boswell: 'No man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money' (Boswell, *Johnson* iii. 19).

28. Not identified by Hawkins, who prints this anecdote, op. cit. 84.

29. Johnson received £100 for *Rasselas*. Since there are twenty sheets (and a few

must pay me, if I write for you'; and the five guineas per sheet no doubt was the price, but I do not know why he called the booksellers *heathens*, unless for their worshipping such an uncouth idol as he is; yet he has other motives than lucre,—prejudice, and bigotry, and pride, and presumption, and arrogance, and pedantry are the hags that brew his ink, though wages alone supply him with paper.<sup>30</sup>

How could you forget to tell me of Mr Whitehed's verses on Nuneham;<sup>31</sup> I am charmed with them. They are the best he ever wrote, except *Variety*.<sup>32</sup>

They say you do not come to town this winter. I am not surprised; your friends here do not seem to be much in your thoughts!

Friday.

I had not sealed my letter so can add a paragraph or two. The House of Commons sat till three this morning, when they voted that the conduct of the navy last year had been the most perfect imaginable; however there were 183 dissentients to 208 admirers.<sup>33</sup> I suppose people will be so silly as to expect such a minority will increase, yet I dare to say that on next vote they will not be above forty.<sup>34</sup>

extra pages) in the two volumes, he was actually paid at the rate of about £5 a sheet, but he was given an additional £25 on the publication of the second edition (W. P. Courtney and David Nichol Smith, *A Bibliography of Samuel Johnson*, Oxford, 1915, p. 85).

30. In a small notebook (now WSL) that HW kept, 1780–3, he wrote, 'Feb. 3rd, 1782. Sir John Hawkins told me that when Dr Sam. Johnson was about his edition of Shakespeare, he, Sir John, told him that now he had finished his dictionary for profit, he supposed he would now labour for fame. "No, Sir," replied Johnson, "there is no incitement to writing but necessity." And Sir John told me that a clergyman had very lately told him a story to the same purpose. That clergyman being with Johnson, said to him, "Dr Johnson, you write with such facility, I wish you would write a sermon for me." "No, Sir," said Johnson, "my pen is only excited by gain. I am so used to write for the heathens (the booksellers) that I cannot write for nothing. When I wrote my *Rasselas*, I knew they could not do without me, and I made them pay five guineas a sheet. If I write for you, you

must pay me." The clergyman understood the five guineas a sheet as the price. I don't know why he called the booksellers *heathens*, unless for their worshipping such a foul idol' (*A Note Book of Horace Walpole*, ed. W. S. Lewis, New York, 1927, pp. 22–3). HW explains his attitude towards Johnson in a letter to Mary Berry 26 May 1791 (BERRY i. 275–7).

31. 'On the Late Improvements at Nuneham,' apparently first printed in the posthumous third volume of Whitehead's works edited by Mason (*Poems by William Whitehead . . . Vol. III*, York, 1788, p. 75).

32. Published in 1776 (*ante* 18 Feb. 1776).

33. A resolution of censure on the conduct of the navy during the American war, especially during 1781, was introduced by Fox on 7 Feb. and defeated. According to Cobbett, the noes numbered 205, not 208 (*Parl. Hist.* xxii. 932).

34. HW's prediction proved wrong. Fox returned to the attack on 20 Feb., moving 'that it appears to this House, that there has been great mismanagement in the conduct of his Majesty's naval affairs in the year 1781' and this motion was de-

The Duc de Chartres<sup>35</sup> has made Madame de Genlis<sup>36</sup> *gouverneur de ses enfants*; <sup>37</sup> why should not Madame de Schwellenberg<sup>38</sup> be governor to the Prince, and Bishop Hurd wet-nurse? <sup>39</sup> If you love imperial logic, pray read the Emperor's rescript on the suppression of popery; <sup>40</sup> it is a model of reasoning that may be applied to the restoration of popery here, for it shows that everything *tient uniquement de la volonté libre et arbitraire des princes de la terre*<sup>41</sup>—did you ever see so happy an union as that of *libre* and *arbitraire*?

### From MASON, Saturday 9 February 1782

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: YORK 11 FE.

York, Feb. 9th 1782.

**A**S I heard from Lord Harcourt that your gout was going off I did not trouble you with my *obliging inquiries*, and I was much immersed in the stupendous work<sup>1</sup> which you did me the favour to send

feated by only nineteen votes (*ibid.* xxii. 946; *Journals of the House of Commons* xxxviii. 809). See *post* 23 Feb. 1782.

35. Louis-Philippe-Joseph de Bourbon (1747-93), Duc de Chartres, 1752; Duc d'Orléans, 1785; 'Philippe-Egalité'; prince of the blood; father of Louis-Philippe, King of France; executed in the Revolution.

36. Stéphanie-Félicité Ducrest de Saint-Aubin (1746-1830), m. (1763) Charles-Alexis Brulart, Comte de Genlis, later Marquis de Sillery; dramatist and educational writer; formerly the Duc's mistress, and at present in his household as tutor to his daughters.

37. The appointment of a woman to the post of *gouverneur* of the prince's sons was unprecedented. Madame de Genlis gives an account of the rather casual way in which the appointment was made, early in Jan. 1782, in her *Mémoires*, ed. J. Lucas-Dubretton, 1928, i. 190-3.

38. Elizabeth Juliana Schwellenberg (or Schwellenbergen) (ca. 1728-97), the Queen's domineering and supposedly influential Keeper of the Robes (GM 1797, lxvii pt i. 261-2). She figures prominently

in Fanny Burney's *Diary* and Mrs Papendiek's *Journals*.

39. Hurd had been preceptor to the Prince of Wales.

40. Since late in 1781 Joseph II had issued various orders designed to give him more independence of Rome in the management of ecclesiastical affairs in his territories. HW may have reference to a circular letter of 12 Nov. 1781 on religious toleration (published among other places in the *Courrier de l'Europe* 25 Jan. 1782) or to the decree of 15 Dec. 1781 on the same general subject (*Courrier* 8 Feb. 1782). Word of the Emperor's suppression of certain religious houses had also reached England by this time (HW to Mann 17 Jan. 1782) and HW may have seen a text of the order, dated 12 Jan. 1782, though it was not published in the *Courrier* until 8 March.

41. This phrase does not appear in the texts of Joseph's edicts as printed in the *Courrier de l'Europe*, or in any comment on them that we have found.

1. Milles's edition of Rowley.

me. I am become almost a bankrupt in my correspondence with all my friends. However I hope to repay you in full by a nameless something<sup>2</sup> which your communication of that work has occasioned, in which if 'I have flapped the fools I have not left the knaves in quiet.'<sup>3</sup> But no more of this at present.

I have heard that a man of some consequence and an F.R.S. (if that be a thing of consequence) who was personally acquainted with Chatterton and to whom he had confessed his fraud is about to publish what will be a complete confutation.<sup>4</sup> It seems he lay by, till the Dean's publication was over. Cruel rogue whoever he be! This account came from Niccols,<sup>5</sup> printer to the Royal Society.<sup>6</sup> If you can learn more of the matter,<sup>7</sup> I wish you would and let me know it, for it may be of use to me.<sup>8</sup>

Though my residence will be out in two days I shall remain here some time longer. Therefore do not change your direction till you hear again from me. When I leave this place I shall go to Aston, for I cannot conveniently come to town till late in the spring.

I have nothing more to add at present except that I am most sincerely yours,

W.M.

2. The *Archæological Epistle*, mentioned *ante* 16 Dec. 1781, 10 Jan. 1782, and *post* 15 March 1782.

3. A phrase from HW's letter of 10 Jan. 1782.

4. What Mason heard was apparently garbled, or he misunderstood it. The 'man of some consequence' could be Thomas Warton, Herbert Croft, or George Steevens, all of whom had a part in the publication of evidence of Chatterton's fraud; of the three, however, only Steevens was a fellow of the Royal Society. Warton in his *Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems Attributed to Thomas Rowley, in which the Arguments of the Dean of Exeter, and Mr Bryant, are Examined* (*post* 23 March 1782 *bis*) published a letter from Croft to Steevens in which Croft told of hearing from one John Rudhall (fl. 1768-94), an apothecary's apprentice in

Bristol, a contemporary and friend of Chatterton's, that he 'assisted Chatterton in disguising several pieces of parchment with the appearances of age' (pp. 119-20; cf. E. H. W. Meyerstein, *A Life of Thomas Chatterton*, 1930, p. 119). Rudhall appears to be the acquaintance of Chatterton who figures in Mason's account.

5. John Nichols (1745-1826), printer and author; acquaintance of HW's.

6. Lockyer Davis (1719-91) had been named printer to the Royal Society in 1777, but for a few years after 1777 the title-pages of publications of the Society state that the printing was done by Nichols for Davis.

7. See *post* 14 Feb. and 23 March 1782 *bis*.

8. Presumably in the *Archæological Epistle*, but Mason makes no use in it of Rudhall's testimony.



## TO MASON, Thursday 14 February 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 221-4.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 14, 1782.

YOUR letter and mine must have passed each other incog; for we wrote at the same time, but mine was directed to Aston where I thought you. It may wait, for there was nothing in it that called for dispatch or answer. Yours was more welcome for it promised your coming, though not speedily, and a good effect from Dr Milles.<sup>1</sup> I had a good pretence for sending for Mr Nichols himself, as he is to bring me a parcel from Mr Cole,<sup>2</sup> and he has promised to come with it himself. I had instructed Kirgate to sift him<sup>3</sup> but he only replied in general that answers are expected from Mr Warton,<sup>4</sup> Mr Steevens<sup>5</sup> and others. I shall keep this back till I have seen him.

I want you to send me a correct copy of your replicatory ode to the Duchess of Devonshire.<sup>6</sup> I have at last after some years of solicitation prevailed on Lady Harcourt's modesty to allow me to print a small number of copies of some of her poems. As this is to be a private<sup>7</sup> impression and would of itself be too slender and yet is not to be profaned with miscellaneous indifferents, I shall add Mr Whitehead's *Nuneham* and (to introduce *your* ode) the Duchess's, if the Duke will consent. She does, but he hesitates. I have always wished that Strawberry should be honoured by something of yours, and here it will be with good company and friends. I might have been dignified by reprinting Lord Hardwicke's ponderous volume of Sir Dudley Carleton,<sup>8</sup> a favour the miser offered me to save himself the expense, but I was brutal enough to refuse it.

1. From Milles's edition of Rowley, which HW had sent to Mason. The effect was the work promised in Mason's letter of 9 Feb., the *Archæological Epistle*.

2. See COLE ii. 295. That the parcel arrived later on this day is evident from COLE ii. 297.

3. When HW sent Kirgate to Nichols's shop to inquire about the parcel.

4. For Warton's answer see *ante* 9 Feb. 1782, n. 4.

5. George Steevens (1736-1800), commentator on Shakespeare. HW had recently made his acquaintance (COLE ii.

287, 290). The 'answer' was probably Croft's letter to Steevens (*ante* 9 Feb. 1782, n. 4), but Steevens made another contribution to the controversy, a letter to the *St James's Chronicle*, published 28 March 1782, impugning the veracity of Mrs Mary Newton, Chatterton's sister.

6. See *ante* 3 Jan. 1782.

7. Previously printed 'favourite'; emended by Dr Chapman.

8. Sir Dudley Carleton (1574-1632), Kt, 1610; cr. (1626) Bn Carlton and (1628) Vct Dorchester; diplomatist. See *ante* 18 Feb. 1776 and nn. 44-5.

Lord Carmarthen has not captivated the good will of the world by his late attack on the new peer<sup>9</sup>—it was ill-timed; nor was that temple of honour and virtue so unpolluted as to be liable to contamination: one thing the insult proved, the servility of the whole military profession who had not been so squeamish.<sup>10</sup>

I forgot to tell you what perhaps you had not heard. Washington is remarkably silent and serious and when he banqueted his prisoner Lord Cornwallis, spoke little, never smiled, but happening to ask if it was true that Lord Dunmore was returning to resume his government of Virginia,<sup>11</sup> and being answered in the affirmative, the hero burst out into a fit of laughter. This was the philosopher laughing at the ass that has left mumbling *thistles*<sup>12</sup> for clover that is out of his reach.

I dined on Monday with the Harcourts at Mrs Montagu's new palace,<sup>13</sup> and was much surprised. Instead of vagaries it is a noble simple edifice. When I came home, I recollected that though I had thought it so magnificent a house there was not a morsel of gilding, it is grand not tawdry, nor larded and embroidered and pomponned with shreds and remnants and *cliquant* like all the harlequinades of Adam, which never let the eye repose a moment.

From architecture it is natural for me to slide to *Anecdotes of Painting*. There is a new genius, one Opy,<sup>14</sup> a Cornish lad of nineteen, who has taught himself to colour in a strong, bold, masterly style by studying nature and painting from beggars and poor chil-

9. On 7 Feb. 1782 Lord Carmarthen moved that it would be derogatory to the honour of the House of Lords if a person under such a censure of a court-martial as Lord George Germain received after Minden were to be raised to the peerage. The motion was rejected and Lord George was created Viscount Sackville 11 Feb. (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 999–1006; *Last Journals* ii. 398–9).

10. As to protest at Lord George's conduct of the American war in his capacity of secretary of state for America.

11. He had been driven from Virginia in 1775 (*ante* 21 Dec. 1775 and n. 6). The source of this anecdote (which seems to be without foundation) has not been found.

12. Fable clxiii in Samuel Croxall's *Fables of Æsop and Others*, 1722. Dunmore was a Scot.

13. Montagu House in Portman Square (now No. 22). Her former town house had been in Hill Street. 'Mrs Montagu's noble house in Portman Square was built by Mr Stuart and first inhabited by her in 1782. The finishing was from designs of Mr Wyat' (*A Note Book of Horace Walpole*, ed. W. S. Lewis, New York, 1927, p. 52). The house was not completely furnished and decorated until many years later (BERRY i. 290 and n. 6). Robert Adam was to have been the architect, but he offended Mrs Montagu by keeping her waiting (Reginald Blunt, *Mrs Montagu*, [1923], ii. 13 and 82).

14. John Opie (1761–1807), R.A., 1788; professor of painting to the Royal Academy, 1805–7.

dren. He has done a head of Mrs Delany for the King<sup>15</sup>—*oui vraiment*, it is pronounced like Rembrandt, but as I told her, it does not look older than she is, but older than she does.

My next anecdote is only to introduce a *bon mot*. A man I forget his name,<sup>16</sup> has made a drawing, which he says is for a companion to Copley's 'Death of Lord Chatham.'<sup>17</sup> As the latter exhibits all the great men of Britain, this is to record the beauties,—but what do you think is the subject he has pitched upon? the *daughter of Pharaoh* saving Moses.<sup>18</sup> The Princess Royal is the Egyptian infanta, accompanied by the Duchesses of Gloucester, Cumberland,<sup>19</sup> Devonshire, Rutland,<sup>20</sup> Lady Duncannon,<sup>21</sup> etc., not all beauties—well, this sketch is to be seen *over against Brooks's*.<sup>22</sup> George Selwyn says he could recommend a better companion for this piece, which should be *the sons of Pharaoh*<sup>23</sup> at the opposite house.

15. The portrait was at Hampton Court in 1898, and at Kensington Palace by 1911 (Ernest Law, *The Royal Gallery of Hampton Court, Illustrated*, 1898, p. 148; Ada Earland, *John Opie and His Circle*, 1911, p. 273).

16. It was John Keyse Sherwin (ca 1751–90). His brief and unfortunate career is described by J. T. Smith in *Nollekens and His Times*, ed. W. Whitten, 1917, ii. 73–81.

17. One of the most celebrated historical paintings of the eighteenth century, painted by the American artist, John Singleton Copley (1737–1815), R.A., 1779, who had settled in London in 1776. Its exhibition during 1781 had attracted large crowds and brought the artist fame and wealth. It was later engraved by Bartolozzi. 2500 copies of the engraving were sold. The painting is now in the Tate Gallery. See *Anecdotes of Painting*, vol. v, ed. F. W. Hilles and P. B. Daghljan, New Haven, 1937, pp. 24–7 and 116.

18. According to a story in circulation in 1785 the subject was suggested to Sherwin by a personal experience: 'One night, when he was entertaining a party of friends, a child was left at his door. It was taken in, and Sherwin put it to the vote among his guests as to whether he should keep it. The verdict was favourable and this incident suggested to Sherwin the subject of his print, *The Finding of Moses*'

(W. T. Whitley, *Artists and Their Friends in England 1700–1799*, 1928, ii. 128).

19. Anne Luttrell (1743–1808), m. (1) (1765) Christopher Horton; m. (2) (1771) Henry Frederick, D. of Cumberland (GEC sub Cumberland; GM 1765, xxxv. 395).

20. Lady Mary Isabella Somerset (1756–1831), 5th dau. of 4th D. of Beaufort; m. (1775) Charles Manners, 4th D. of Rutland.

21. Henrietta Frances Spencer (1761–1821), younger sister of the Duchess of Devonshire; m. (1780) Frederick Ponsonby, styled Vct Duncannon, later (1793) 3d E. of Bessborough. A list of the persons represented in the finished picture is given in Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, Leipzig, 1907–50, sub Sherwin.

22. At Sherwin's studio, St James's Street (Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts, 1769–1904*, 1905–6, vii. 114). The finished painting is said to have been sold at Christie's ca 1875, but its present whereabouts is unknown. An engraving by Sherwin was published in 1789 (N&Q 1880, 6th ser., i. 406 and 445; DNB sub Sherwin). It is reproduced in J. T. Smith, op. cit. ii opposite p. 78.

23. Following Mitford, Cunningham and Toynbee print this '*Pharaoh* (faro).'

Friday 15th.

Mr Nichols has been with me, and told me that a person whom he did not name, is known to have furnished some material parchment to Chatterton, which will be disclosed in Mr Warton's answer to Bryant and Milles.<sup>23a</sup> I did not care to be more particularly inquisitive, lest Nichols should have suspected that I wanted to anticipate this discovery myself, but as Mr Warton is to publish soon, I will give you the earliest notice of what he shall produce.

You have flattered me I doubt with false hopes of your coming in the spring, for Lord Harcourt says you told him in the same breath that you should not come.<sup>24</sup> I am pleased at least that you know I am so interested in your coming that you think it necessary to deceive me. You used to say that the Lord of Aston<sup>25</sup> made you dislike London; does its present Lord make you prefer Aston?<sup>26</sup>

The Bishop of Bristol<sup>27</sup> is dead; we shall know who preached the most fulsome sermon on the late Fast<sup>28</sup> by the nomination of the successor.<sup>29</sup> Our high priests do not abstain from flesh, but in the true Mosaic spirit recommend *letting out blood*.<sup>30</sup>

Adieu! I hate you absent, but I will love you again prodigiously if you will come.

## TO MASON, Saturday 23 February 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 225-6; the last paragraph (except for the last sentence) was omitted by Mitford and is printed here from Mitford's transcripts of omitted passages, Add. MSS 32563 fol. 52-3. The complete letter is in Toynbee xii. 174-6.

23a. See *ante* 9 Feb. 1782, n. 4.

24. Mason had written to Lord Harcourt 9 Feb. 1782: 'I do not come to town this winter' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 73).

25. Mason's former patron, the late Lord Holderness.

26. HW probably knew that Mason was not on good terms with his kinsman, Harry Verelst, who had bought the manor of Aston from Holderness. Mason had told Lord Harcourt that he was delaying his departure from York because Verelst was at Aston (*loc. cit.*).

27. Thomas Newton (1704-82), Bp of Bristol 1761-82 and Dean of St Paul's 1768-82, died 14 Feb. 1782.

28. A general Fast for success in the American war (and therefore ridiculed by the Opposition) had been observed on 8 Feb. 1782. The King's proclamation of the Fast was published in the *London Courant* 12 Jan. 1782.

29. Newton was succeeded by Lewis Bagot. See *post* 23 Feb. 1782.

30. That is, support the American war.

Feb. 23, 1782.

THE power of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished,<sup>1</sup> very true, and it is diminished, a good deal indeed, if it valued the extent to which its rays used to extend; well, but it does not dart its influence so hotly when on that spot that was wont to reflect its beams with so little refraction. Lord Sandwich escaped on Wednesday but by a plurality of nineteen,<sup>2</sup> and last night the American war survived but by one vote,<sup>3</sup> which will not save its life, for even the vigorous and enterprising young Ellis<sup>4</sup> will not dare to cross the Rubicon,<sup>5</sup> when he has but one man more in his army than is on the opposite shore.

These points premised, I have a very imperfect guess at what will ensue. I expect no real good, much confusion no doubt. Sandwich perhaps will decamp. I should not wonder if Lord North should for the first time think seriously of retiring.<sup>6</sup> Rigby and the Lord Advocate, I am sure think of staying, for they last night declared themselves *converted*,<sup>7</sup> undoubtedly, if the minority is likely to be converted into a majority; besides the Lord Advocate who is stickling to be treasurer of the chambers<sup>8</sup> for life, if he should quit his profes-

1. Dunning's motion in the House of Commons: see *ante* 7 April 1780.

2. '20th [Feb. 1782]. Charles Fox moved an inquiry into Lord Sandwich's mismanagement of the navy during 1781. . . . The motion was rejected by a majority of 19—a small one, but prognosticating the downfall of the ministry' (*Last Journals* ii. 403-4; cf. Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 933-46).

3. General Conway 'moved the House of Commons to address the King to give directions to his ministers to use every means in their power to restore peace, and to give up all thoughts of subduing America by force. . . . At two [A.M.] the House divided and rejected Conway's motion, but by a majority of one voice only! the numbers being 194 to 193—ample intelligence to all who were waiting to see which way the scale would incline' (*Last Journals* ii. 407-9; cf. Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1028-48).

4. Speaking on his motion, Conway mentioned Ellis as one 'who, though not a young man, was nevertheless a young minister' (*ibid.* xxii. 1029).

5. For Lord Mansfield's allusion to the Rubicon, which HW probably has in mind, see *ante* 18 July 1778 and n. 10, and 18 Aug. 1779.

6. HW was right. The resignation of the ministry was announced by Lord North 20 March (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1214-5). North had frequently expressed a wish to retire (W. Baring Pemberton, *Lord North*, 1938, pp. 298-302).

7. The speeches of Rigby and Dundas are briefly reported in Cobbett (xxii. 1047-8), but both are represented as speaking against Conway's motion. Rigby remarked, however, that since 'the complexion of the times had altered, . . . it was no longer practicable' to pursue the war. Dundas was loyal to Lord North throughout the ministerial crisis (Holden Furber, *Henry Dundas, First Viscount Melville, 1742-1811*, 1931, pp. 14-17; Cyril Matheson, *The Life of Henry Dundas*, 1933, pp. 77-81).

8. 'The treasurer of the chamber was an office of very considerable profit. At his office all the King's tradesmen were paid their bills' (Robert Beatson, *Political In-*

sion to be treasurer of the navy too, had not completed his bargain;<sup>9</sup> when scales are very even, a grain will turn them; a dram of reason will produce conviction, when a pound of arguments had had no weight.

If I wrote for an hour, I could furnish you with nothing more than conjectures which would be very vague. You had better come yourself and look at the hurricane, which will not end in a moment; yet it may. I have no opinion of the conduct of the generals who have gained ground; nay, though they have learned to fight, they know not how to improve their advantages, and if they should, they will quarrel about the spoil. However I am clear that it is the present calamitous situation, though it seemed to have made so little impression, that produced the present crisis, aided indeed by the treachery of some of the Court, and by the wretched tools it employed; therefore, though the Opposition should lose the moment, or the Court have address to divide them, the moment will return again, not of *restoring* the constitution, (pray have patience and don't think again of improving it, which would only confound us more) but of opportunities of checking more mischief. That is the most I expect, but it is impossible to crowd into a letter such an inundation of ideas as present themselves. I see comfort in some light, solid hopes in none. I do see new mischiefs at hand that have not yet disclosed themselves, and which I doubt will destroy us at home without the necessary consequences from all we have lost, and from the situation of our moneyed affairs;<sup>10</sup> but this is a topic I shall not broach on paper.

It is no new Fast candidate that is to have the vacant mitre,<sup>11</sup> but that poor creature Dr Bagot,<sup>12</sup> and the Fast sycophant Bishop Butler is to have the deanery of St Paul's.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps you thought these cures of souls would have been given to the Mohocks, Arnold and Tarle-

*dex*, 1806, Supplement to vol. iii. p. iii). The office was one of those abolished by act of Parliament in 1782.

9. Dundas was active in the political manœuvring of the last days of North's administration, but his bargaining for the treasurership of the navy took the form of a refusal to accept the post (and thus bring strength to the King's supporters) unless his tenureship of the Signet Office were changed from one at the King's pleasure to a permanent one. There is no evidence that he sought the treasurership of the chamber. See Furber, *op. cit.* 14-15, and Matheson, *op. cit.* 76-80.

10. The new loan proposed by Lord North was at rates unfavourable to the government (*London Chronicle* 16-19 Feb., li. 172; *post* 28 Feb. 1782).

11. The see of Bristol, vacated by the death of Thomas Newton.

12. Bagot's nomination was announced in the *London Gazette* 23 Feb. 1782.

13. Which Newton had held in addition to his bishopric. HW was mistaken. See *post* 28 Feb. 1782.

ton, who are bloody enough to wear lawn sleeves. I must tell you a saying of Sheridan, too sublime to be called a *bon mot*. Tarleton boasts of having butchered more men, and lain with more women than anybody—'*Lain with*,' said Sheridan, 'what a weak expression;—he should have said, *ravished*—rapes are the relaxation of murder.'<sup>14</sup> Adieu! I have not time to add a word.

## FROM MASON, Sunday 24 February 1782

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: <The Honourable H>orace Walpole, <Ber>kley Square, London.

Postmark: YORK <?26> FE.

York, Feb. 24th 1782.

I SEND the ode,<sup>1</sup> as you desire it, yet I must own that somehow or other I do not feel about it as perhaps I ought, when you mean to do it so much honour. The plain truth is I writ it for her Grace's ear and for that only, and as I think the Duke is perfectly right in hesitating, so I on my part would wish to hesitate if I could. I verily believe certain of the house of Ca'ndish<sup>2</sup> thought it impertinent in me that I presumed to address her, and I have often been sorry that I did. As matters stand I really think that the Duke's fiat should be had for the publication of my answer as well as that ode which occasioned it, and thus having honestly told you my mind, I leave you to act as you think proper, adding only that I hitherto have kept the ode so much a secret, that I never told either Lord or Lady Harcourt a syllable about the matter.

I think as highly of Mr Whitehead's verses<sup>3</sup> as you do, and I wonder that I forgot to mention them.

I should suspect that if everything answers according to the scheme

14. The names of Arnold and Tarleton were currently in the news because of their arrival in England after Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown. Tarleton had distinguished himself in cavalry engagements in the campaign in the southern states. 'Col. Tarleton bragging that he had killed more men and lain with more women than anybody, Sheridan said, "*Lain with*! That is too weak a word; he should have said, *ravished more women*, for rapes are

the proper relaxation for murder"' (*A Note Book of Horace Walpole*, ed. W. S. Lewis, New York, 1927, p. 27).

1. 'Hope's Answer.' See *ante* 14 Feb. 1782.

2. Mason probably means Lord John Cavendish.

3. 'On the Late Improvements at Nuneham.' See *ante* 7 Feb. 1782.

laid, you will in about three weeks from the date of this receive a most wonderful production entitled *An Archæological Epistle* to a certain editor,<sup>4</sup> but suspend all curiosity and forbear even to hint a syllable of expectation to your dearest friends. Profound secrecy is on this more necessary than ever, and there is so much difficulty in managing the matter that perhaps it may be still-born or much mangled in its birth. However, the best precautions are and will be taken about it.<sup>5</sup>

I have with great labour and pain at last completed my anthem-book for the use of the church of York to which I have prefixed a short 'Essay on Cathedral Music,'<sup>6</sup> at which your friend Sir John Hawkins will be hugely offended,<sup>7</sup> and I should not wonder if it produced a controversy. The book itself will not be worth sending you, but I will contrive when the sheets are dry to send you the essay. I give the impression to our library here,<sup>8</sup> so it will only be sold on the spot.

I have by no means told you and Lord Harcourt two different stories about my southern expedition. I mean to take London, etc., in my way to Nuneham, and this about the commencement of summer, which I call June, but this plan is not like the law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not.<sup>8a</sup> I may perhaps come to town much sooner.<sup>9</sup>

I don't like George Selwyn's pun about faro at all. I made a better myself lately, and I will be judged by Lord Harcourt. When the

4. Jeremiah Milles.

5. HW seems to have kept Mason's secret, but many guessed the authorship of the poem (*post* 2 April 1782 and HW to Cole 13 April 1782, *COLE* ii. 314-5).

6. *A Copious Collection of Those Portions of the Psalms of David, Bible, and Liturgy, Which Have Been Set to Music and Sung as Anthems in the Cathedral and Collegiate Churches of England. Arranged in Chronological Order . . . and Published for the Use of the Church of York, under the Direction of William Mason, M.A. Precentor of That Cathedral. By Whom is Prefixed a Critical and Historical Essay on Cathedral Music*, York, 1782. See Davies, *York Press* 291-2.

7. In Mason's essay, which is largely a plea for greater simplicity in church music, Hawkins is occasionally cited as

being in disagreement with the author's views, but Mason's remarks are polite and temperate. When HW saw the essay he was unable to discover anything to give offence (*post* 22 April 1782). The essay is included in the collected edition of Mason's *Works*, 1811, iii. 327-59.

8. Presumably the Minster library. But Davies reported in 1868 that the library then had 'no copy of an earlier date than the edition of 1794, which is printed by G. Peacock, the successor of Ann Ward' (*op. cit.* 291).

8a. Daniel 6.8.

9. Mason visited Nuneham in July (*post* 2 and 8 July 1782) and on 22 Oct. wrote Lord Harcourt from London: 'I have been at Strawberry, where I found its owner in good health and despairing political spirits' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 75).



M. de Bouillie<sup>10</sup> had retaken St Eustatia,<sup>11</sup> I said, 'Alas! I have lived to see the day when French *bouillie* is better than English roast beef.' Spell the words right before you tell it, and—

Addio.

I mean to go to Aston about a week from the date of this. My address then is near Worsop, Notts.

TO MASON, Thursday 28 February 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 229-31.

Feb. 28, 1782.

NOT only the American war is checked, but despotism itself is at bay. Out of that sink, the House of Commons, seeds of virtue have sprung up. The administration was defeated at one this morning by a minor-grown a majority of nineteen.<sup>1</sup> Conway was general, and exerted the spirit of a young cadet; every mouth (that is able to open itself today) sounds his praises. Those mouths who have so long said nothing but *yes*, you may be sure have not recovered their dismay enough to say *no*. Whether Lord North may not by his fall, and by touching his mother dirt recover, I do not pretend to say, I rather hope he will, for I would have those who have made the war make the peace, and then their measure will be full. The ministers received a less defeat yesterday too at the India House, where their saltpetre contract was set aside.<sup>2</sup> The profits of Thompson<sup>3</sup> the con-

10. François-Claude-Amour (1739-1800), Marquis de Bouillé; French general; governor of Guadeloupe, 1768, and governor-general of the Windward Islands 1777-83 (Amour-Louis-Charles-René, Marquis de Bouillé, *Essai sur la vie du Marquis de Bouillé* [François-Claude-Amour], 1853).

11. After being seized by the British early in 1781 (*ante* 29 March 1781), the island was retaken by the French 26 Nov. 1781 (Bouillé, *op. cit.* 91-3). News of the disaster had reached England in January 1782 (*London Courant* 11 Jan.).

1. Conway's motion against the further prosecution of the war in America passed

by a vote of 234 to 215 (*Journal of the House of Commons* xxxviii. 861).

2. In Dec. 1781 the Board of Ordnance contracted to buy a quantity of saltpetre, at an exorbitant price, from John Townson. An investigation was instituted because the government was under contract for saltpetre with the East India Company (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 946-63). On 27 Feb. 1782 a general court of proprietors of East India stock met to investigate Townson's conduct. At the meeting the inquiry was postponed to 8 March, at which time Townson was cleared by a great majority (*Lloyd's Evening Post* 27 Feb.-1 March 1782, l. 205, and *London Courant* 9 March

tractor were to be but 26 out of 49.<sup>4</sup> This and the hoisting Atkinson,<sup>5</sup> a more overgrown contractor still, to be one of the five preferred to the loan over all the bankers of London,<sup>6</sup> is another flower in that wreath which binds Lord North's brows, though with no detriment to its predominant poppies.<sup>7</sup> Two such contracts, and two armies taken in a net,<sup>8</sup> are the ovations and triumphs of this egregious minister.

Bishop Butler, and I rejoice therefore, is *débouté* of the deanery of St Paul's; it was promised to him. The Chancellor went to Lord North and asked it;<sup>9</sup> he replied, sorry, but it was promised. 'God damn<sup>10</sup> your promise, then I will get it somewhere else,' and got it.<sup>11</sup>

I yesterday received yours of the 24th; we shall have time to consider about the odes, for as yet I have heard nothing of the D. of Devon[shire]'s imprimatur, and as his brother Lord George Henry was married last night to the great heiress of Northampton,<sup>12</sup> there will be no making application again yet. Nay, I have not yet received

1782). HW's remark about the setting aside of the contract is not clear. The ministers, of course, were implicated in Townson's transaction, and HW may have regarded the continuance of the inquiry, voted 27 Feb., as at least a temporary defeat for the administration in its efforts to vindicate its dealings with Townson.

3. An error for 'Townson': John Townson (d. 1797), merchant, director of the East India Company, and M. P. Milborne Port 1780-7 (GM 1797, lxvii pt i. 261; C. H. Philips, *The East India Company, 1784-1834*, Manchester, 1940, *passim*; *Members of Parliament*, pt ii. 1878, pp. 167, 180).

4. This is not clear. In the debate on the saltpetre contract Townson was said to have made a profit of 50 per cent (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 960), but there is no evidence to suggest that he lost any of his advantages.

5. Richard Atkinson (d. 1785), partner in the firm of Hutchinson Mure (*ante* ca 25 Aug. 1778); M.P. New Romney 1784-5; alderman of London, 1784 (GM 1785, lv pt i. 407 and pt ii. 570; A. B. Beaven, *Aldermen of the City of London*, 1908-13, ii. 137).

6. Atkinson's firm was one of eight, not five, that were given exclusive rights to subscribe the loan of 1782, an arrangement resented by other investors. Atkin-

son, already stigmatized by the Opposition for abuse of a rum contract (*ante* ca 25 Aug. 1778 and *London Courant* 13 March 1782), was accused of managing the restricted loan with the connivance of Lord North (*London Courant* 26 Feb. 1782). The details of the loan are given in *Corr. Geo. III* v. 371-4.

7. An allusion to Lord North's drowsiness.

8. Burgoyne's at Saratoga and Cornwallis's at Yorktown.

9. For his younger brother, Thomas Thurlow (1737-91), Bp of Lincoln 1779-87 and Dean of St Paul's 1782-7; Bp of Durham 1787-91.

10. Changed by Mitford to 'Confound.' The correct reading was first printed by Mrs Toynbee from Mitford's notebook, Add. MSS 32563 fol. 52.

11. The appointment is listed in *London Gazette* 23 Feb. 1782 and *London Chronicle* 23-6 Feb. 1782, li. 193. Thurlow resigned the deanship on his translation to Durham in 1787.

12. Lord George Augustus Henry Cavendish (1754-1834), cr. (1831) Earl of Burlington, m. (27 Feb. 1782) Lady Elizabeth Compton (1760-1835), only dau. and heiress of Charles, 7th E. of Northampton (GEC; Francis Bickley, *The Cavendish Family*, 1911, p. 275).

what Lady Harcourt will contribute, nor could I have leisure at present to attend to the Press, having a thousand avocations, though no real business—not political, for I only sit at home and hear what passes, and shall neither go to my neighbour's levee,<sup>13</sup> nor to that in Grosvenor Square,<sup>14</sup> should either be so happy in his own estimation as to attain a *real* one. The Marquis has long had a plaything one.<sup>15</sup> Alas! I too have a plaything Court that takes up some of my time; however I shall always be so insignificant myself as to be ready for my own amusements whenever I have leisure for them. Connections make themselves whether one will or not, but nobody can make one be a minister against one's will, unless one is of as little consequence as Ellis.

I do not even reply to your secret, so much I respect one, but I am sorry you will fall on my poor friend Sir John who is a most inoffensive and good being. Do not wound harmless simpletons, you who can gibbet convicts of magnitude.

As you do not like G. Selwyn's last *bon mot*, and dethrone it for one of your own, which I confess is a good one, I shall presume to send you one of mine, though I sin against my own modesty, and abhor self-applause even in the humble guise of a saying. Last week at Princess Amelie's<sup>16</sup> (another of my Courts in miniature) Lady Margaret Compton<sup>17</sup> said she was as poor as Job. 'I wonder,' said Lady Barrymore,<sup>18</sup> 'why people only say *as poor as Job*, and never as rich, for in one part of his life he had great riches.' 'Yes,' said I, 'Madam, but then they pronounce his name differently, and call him *Jobb*.'

As I calculate that you will be at Aston in two days, I shall direct this thither, and hope it will stay for you. I have not time for a word more.

13. The Earl of Shelburne, who aspired to the premiership, lived on the south side of Berkeley Square in what was later called Lansdowne House.

14. Lord Rockingham, Shelburne's rival, lived in Grosvenor Square.

15. Through his leadership of the Rockingham Whigs.

16. Amelia Sophia Eleanora (1711–86), 2d dau. of George II. She lived in Cavendish Square and at Gunnersbury. HW

became a member of her circle about 1761. See MONTAGU i. 57 n. 4.

17. Lady Margaret Compton (ca 1703–86), dau. of George, 4th E. of Northampton (Lady Mary Coke, *Letters and Journals*, Edinburgh, 1889–96, i. 29 n. 2).

18. Lady Margaret Davys (d. 1788 'at an advanced age'), youngest dau. of Paul, 1st Vct Mountcashell, m. (1738) James Barry, 5th E. of Barrymore (GEC *sub* Barry).

## From MASON, Sunday 10 March 1782

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address (in unidentified hand): The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WO<RKSOP> 12 <MR>.

Aston, March 10, 1782.

THOUGH nobody can [more] admire the spirit with which General Conway has conducted himself throughout the great business,<sup>1</sup> nor anybody be more willing to congratulate him and the nation on his success, yet I suppose you and I are agreed that the triumph will be but momentary, and that so far from making any material change either in ministerial men or measures, the nation will continue to be duped, nay rather insulted, much longer and will take it all patiently. As to either restoring or improving the constitution, which in a former letter<sup>2</sup> you say would only confound us more, that seems now out of the question. What is absolutely gone can never be either improved or restored; and I think you have now full demonstration that what you call and have long called the constitution<sup>3</sup> does not by any means exist. If it does, your father (I speak it with due respect to his memory) told a great fib.<sup>4</sup> But truce with politics—Sir John Hawkins is even a better subject, because you say he is an inoffensive and good being, and at worst a harmless simpleton. Be it so, though I think he has shown himself petulant and impertinent in several parts of his history, and especially on the subject of honest John Gay,<sup>5</sup> yet I assure you I have taken no further notice of him than the subject I writ upon, and the principles I meant to support, obliged me to do. I borrowed largely from his farrago in order to prove the very contrary to that which he adduced

1. The defeat of the administration in the vote on Conway's resolution against the continuation of the American war.

2. That of 23 Feb. 1782.

3. HW's views on the constitution, and his reasons for opposing the associations for Parliamentary reform, are stated at length in *Last Journals* ii. 282–7.

4. This charge that HW's view of the constitution differed from his father's is rejected by HW in the following letter.

5. Hawkins had said that 'many

acrimonious expressions and bitter invectives' in *The Beggar's Opera* were prompted by 'the disappointment of Mr Gay in his application for preferment at Court,' and had ironically remarked on Gay's 'greatness of soul' in rejecting a position as gentleman-usher in the royal household for 'a life of ease and servile dependence on the bounty of his friends' (*A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 1776, v. 315–6).

his anecdotes to establish, and acknowledging the debt perhaps I have been yet a little ungrateful to my creditor, but my sarcasms are but few and not sharp-pointed; yet he, and all the fautors<sup>6</sup> of old music, must of necessity be offended at them. The sheets were not dry when I left York, therefore I could not send you them, but 'tis no great matter, they would be but of little if any amusement to you. I wish, rather than hope, that something else<sup>7</sup> will prove more so, but I am very dubious on the matter. A week more I fancy will determine it, and I shall expect your earliest opinion with some impatience.

Mr George Selwyn's *bon mot* was a bad one I still insist upon it. Mine was a better, yours is a better still, but Sheridan's is, as you say, not only better than a *bon mot* but equal to anything that was ever said best. I thank you most heartily for it.

I have at length received a letter from Sir Joshua which tells me that his annotations are finished.<sup>8</sup> I hope to receive them soon, but as they must be printed at the York Press, which works slow though sure, the book cannot come out till next winter.<sup>9</sup> My *English Garden*, corrected and in a smaller form,<sup>10</sup> like my volume of *Poems*,<sup>11</sup> is already printed, but that also will not be published sooner, as it will wait for a commentary which a friend of mine (whom you don't know, but I wish you did), Mr Burgh,<sup>12</sup> is writing upon it. You who can keep volumes ready printed back for years,<sup>13</sup> will do it with an ill grace if you rebuke my tardiness.

I hear a Mr Malone is the proto-antagonist of Dean Milles or Mr Bryant, I know not which, and I suppose Mr T. Warton will speedily second him.<sup>14</sup> I read your unpublished letter on that subject<sup>15</sup> over again, and am still more sorry than ever that it is not in general hands. Certainly common sense was never so grossly affronted as it has been on this subject and you ought to have defended her or his

6. Partisans or patrons (OED).

7. The *Archæological Epistle*.

8. Reynolds's annotations for Mason's translation of Dufresnoy's *De arte graphica*. The letter is missing.

9. See *post* 10 Feb. 1783.

10. The complete *English Garden* was published March 1783 in octavo; the books had been issued separately in quarto (Gaskell 33).

11. First published in 1764.

12. HW had at least heard of Burgh

from Mason before this (*ante* 18 May 1775 and 23 Feb. 1778).

13. Mason is referring to volume iv of the *Anecdotes*, 1780, which HW held up for nine years after it was printed.

14. Mason seems to have forgotten that HW wrote to him about Malone's book against Milles and Bryant (*ante* 7 Feb. 1782), and also about Warton's intentions (*ante* 14 Feb.).

15. *Letter to the Editor of the Miscellanies of Thomas Chatterton*.

cause (for I will not fix the gender of common sense) publicly. But you will smart for it let me tell you, and very soon be forced to claim kindred, yes and close kindred too, with a personage you little wot of,<sup>16</sup> and will not think yourself much honoured by the relationship. Do I not speak parables? wait in silence for the explanation.

Yours, etc.

## TO MASON, Thursday 14 March 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 234-7.

Berkeley Square, March 14, 1782.

NO I cannot agree that General Conway's success will have no effect. I do not mean that it will occasion any change of *men*, which I think could do little good now, but it certainly will check the wild and obstinate prosecution of the American war, and before it can be resumed, the obstinate would not be able to prosecute it, as they will have neither men nor money to send, fleets to transport them, nor any whither to send them. I do agree with you that what is gone cannot be improved, yet what is gone might be restored; I do not say that I think it likely it will, but I am surprised at hearing you quote *my father* against me. How will your Committee approve your citing him, whom in their censorial condemnation of friend and foe they have confounded in a sentence with the worst enemies of this country?<sup>1</sup> It does not suit one in whom all praise would seem

16. After remarking in the concluding couplet of stanza xi of the *Archaeological Epistle* that Walpole considered Chatterton's Rowley poems to be 'Freshe as newe rhymes ydropte inne ladie Myller's vase,' Mason continues,

'Oh Warpool, ne dydde thatte borne vase conteyne

Thilke swotie excremente of poete's leare;

Encaled was thie hearte as carnes ybene,  
Soe to asterte hys [Rowley's] swift-kerved scryvennere.

Thy synne doe Loverde Advocate's surpasse;

Starvation bee thou nempte, thou broder of Dundasse.'

The glosses include: 'borne,' burnished; 'swotie,' sweet; 'leare,' learning; 'encaled,' cold; 'carnes,' stones; 'asterte,' neglect; 'swift-kerved scryvennere,' short-lived transcriber; 'nempte,' called.

1. The Yorkshire Association had published no recent statement, nor are explicit references to Sir Robert Walpole to be found in earlier memorials or declarations. HW may have in mind a sentence in the address of the Yorkshire Committee of Association of 3 Jan. 1781: 'For almost a century, corruption, with few exceptions, and short, very short interruptions, has been the avowed principle of

partiality, to defend his injured character, though his temperate use of power for twenty years without one instance of extending it will not prove his abuse of it, any more than his poverty would prove his wealth; yet allow even me to say that he had one gift that would not have been disserviceable even to Mr Wyvil himself, that of common sense. My father knew that to govern or serve mankind, it was necessary to understand them, and to lead, not to dictate to them. When I see you, I can prove to you that there is more foundation for what I say, than I will specify now; but as I never presume to dispute with you, but because I know we mean the same end, and as I never differ with you but with regret and with deference, and with perfect friendship, I will dismiss a subject that it is too late to recall, and which I would not mention if I had not seen the mischiefs that have happened to the best cause in the world<sup>3</sup> by the want of union and mutual condescension. Hereafter I will give you three memorable and fatal instances.

After dinner.

I had written the above this morning and went out. When I came home to dinner I found Mr Stonhewer had left a message that he could send a letter to you if he had it by six o'clock. I can therefore write more plainly, though I have not time but for a few words.

If it is the general belief that the administration cannot stand, that belief will advance their fall. Yesterday it was universally said that Lord North would resign,—today that he will risk the battle tomorrow.<sup>4</sup> I am glad of that if he is to go, for it will make the Opposition less tractable. Many attempts at negotiation<sup>5</sup> have been and are making; my wish would be that the ministers might be able to maintain their ground some time longer, for three reasons: Opposition would be more united, new misfortunes would contribute to exasperate the country, and the country must be more changed against the

our government' (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 307).

3. The dissolution of North's ministry.

4. '13th [March]. It was publicly given out that Lord North had resigned, or intended it; yet the next day he determined to encounter a repetition of Lord John Cavendish's last motions, which he knew were to be made on the 15th' (*Last Journals* ii. 419). Lord John on 8 March had

moved resolutions of censure on the ministers (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1114-50). On the 15th Sir John Rous moved the withdrawal of confidence of Parliament from the ministers (*ibid.* xxii. 1170-1).

5. Some of the negotiations of the King with various members of the Opposition appear in *Corr. Geo. III* v. 378-80, 383-4, 385-8.

Court than I doubt it is, before the fall will be heavy enough, before the chief person<sup>6</sup> is subdued enough, before any new set can do any good, and before they can maintain their posts six months; for if they can do no good, if the chief person, the House of Lords, half the country, all the Scotch, the army, the clergy and the law are against them, will not seven worse spirits<sup>7</sup> enter into the House than are there already? not worse than the present, but the present grown worse, if that is possible! This is the quintessence of my creed, I have not time to detail it.

I did not publish my letter on Chatterton, because I am sick of most things, and especially of being the subject of talk. I wish to be tranquil and forgotten and to have leisure for my little space to come, to finish what I have to do. I shall be very sorry therefore if your new production hooks me into the question more; however, the tempest is growing so loud that my name will soon be blown away!

I do wish you would come to town. It is not to invite you to a share of the wreck with which I shall concern myself no more than you, but it is my opinion that the nation itself will be a wreck; if not as a patriot, have you no curiosity as a philosopher to survey a huge dismal scene? How can you content yourself with information from scraps of letters and blundered and misrepresented relations in newspapers?

Soame Jenyns has published some new metaphysical disquisitions.<sup>8</sup> I have not gotten through half, though a small volume,<sup>9</sup> yet I am persuaded as I was of his last<sup>10</sup> that it is *ironie*, though as he belongs to Lord Hardwicke<sup>11</sup> and the Court, I do not doubt but the University of Oxford will think him as orthodox as foolish Bishop Bagot. You shall judge by one position; he says that no man can believe a future state on the authority of the New Testament without believing a pre-existent state on the same authority; one of his arguments is, that our

6. The King.

7. 'Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there' (Matthew 12. 45).

8. *Disquisitions on Several Subjects*, 1782, published anonymously; reviewed in GM April 1782, lii. 186-9. HW's copy was sold SH v. 141.

9. A small octavo of 182 pages containing eight essays.

10. *A View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion*, 1776, mentioned ante 4 May 1776.

11. Jenyns owed his place on the board of trade to the first Lord Hardwicke, and at the time of his appointment was called by HW 'the poet laureate of the Yorkes' (*Mem. Geo. II* ii. 140).



sufferings here would be unjust if not punishments for previous misdeeds;<sup>12</sup> is this orthodox doctrine? he seems to me to act like the present ministers who have more than once adopted a question of the Opposition, and loaded it with absurdities in order to throw it out. Can we believe then an omnipotent and all-wise Being inflicted punishments and at the same time took away from the sufferers all knowledge, all consciousness of the crimes they had committed?

The hour presses and I must finish, though I have a thousand things more to say; but if ever persuasion were to attend my words, I should wish it were now, when I would tempt you to town. There is a gleam of some good amidst clouds of evils hanging over us—would you be out of the way of contributing a finger towards dispelling them? at least come and see how the moment is lost or cast away.

I rejoice on Mr Burgh's intended commentary on your *Garden*, such things will survive whatever perishes, and may last till this island is ranked among the nations again.—I have written in such a hurry, I don't know whether you can read me.

## TO MASON, Friday 15 March 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 238–9.

Berkeley Square, March 15, 1782.

WHEN I came home last night (after I had sent away my letter) I found your present of an old Cheshire cheese<sup>1</sup> on my table, which I could not send for, as you had not told me the carrier's name. Though I never sup I could not help eating a whole luncheon of it, and without compliment, never tasted better; I was diverted too with the pains you had taken to pack it up,<sup>2</sup> which I should have thought an effort beyond your patience, but there is nothing you cannot do, from gardening to preserving the mould of an old cheese.

12. HW has fairly summarized one of the arguments in Jenyns's essay 'On a Pre-existent State' (*Disquisitions*, pp. 38–40).

1. This is HW's way of acknowledging the receipt of a copy of Mason's *Archæological Epistle* while respecting the injunction of secrecy (*ante* 24 Feb. 1782). It was a printed copy that HW received

(HW to Cole 13 April 1782, COLE ii. 315), apparently just off the press, for the preface is dated 15 March 1782. HW's copy is in the Harvard Library in his 'Poems of George III'; it has HW's note 'March' on the title-page.

2. That is, the trouble Mason took in imitating Chatterton's archaisms.

As I am not a glutton by nature I cannot enjoy it alone; and yet I doubt there is so much of it rotten that few but epicures will relish it. However the parts that are sound are exquisite and must be delicious to all who love cheese. They who do not, would be choked with it it is so strong—yet that is certainly a merit, and will make it keep the longer, and shows with what good cream it was made. I beg your pardon for saying so much on a cheese, but gratitude does not weigh the materials of a present but the intention, and when a gift is perfectly to my taste, as this is, I am more thankful than for a piece of plate whose value consists in its heaviness, and not in the fashion.

I must now jump from the dairy to literature. Soame Jenyns's book is a *chef-d'œuvre* of impudent profligacy—at least the seventh chapter on government and civil liberty is so. It contains a direct attack on liberty and tells the people that they have a right in turbulent and factious times to call for arbitrary power.<sup>3</sup> This is more direct than even Macpherson, Johnston or Sir John Dalrymple have gone. The clergy will forgive his undermining the New Testament, if he can give them despotism in its place. I wish you would persuade Mr Burgh to answer<sup>4</sup> this galley-slave; nobody is more capable, no, nor of confuting his whole book, which is a very small one. It would be useful too to unravel his irony which is mighty creditable to his patron Lord Hardwick, that housekeeper to the Church,<sup>5</sup> and of whom one thinks with horror when one recollects, that after driving his brother<sup>6</sup> to despair for accepting the seals,<sup>7</sup> he and his other

3. 'I agree with these pretended patriots, that the people in every country have a right to resist manifest grievances. . . . Whenever they groan under the rod of tyranny, they have a right to shake it off, and form a constitution more productive of liberty; and, in like manner, if they find themselves torn by irreconcilable factions, and debilitated by internal contentions, they have an equal right to change it for a government more arbitrary and decisive' (*Disquisitions on Several Subjects*, 1782, pp. 129–30).

4. Burgh's competence in theological controversy had been demonstrated by his *Scriptural Confutation of the Arguments* . . . Produced by the Rev. Mr Lindsey, 1774. See ante 18 May 1775.

5. 'With the clergy, indeed, he [Hard-

wicke] had much connection: and being a man of no vice, and by poring over historic MSS supposed to be learned, he seemed adapted to fill a nominal charge in a society that is expected to be devout and studious' (*Mem. Geo. III* i. 314–5).

6. Hon. Charles Yorke (1722–70), attorney-general 1762–3, 1765–6; lord chancellor, 1770 (for three days).

7. Despite promises to Lord Rockingham that he would not accept the chancellorship and thus ally himself with the Court, and despite several explicit refusals of the office, Yorke finally yielded to his own ambitions and to the King's importunity and accepted the post. HW reports that Rockingham and Hardwicke received him as a renegade, that 'Lord Hardwicke refused to hear his brother's

brothers<sup>8</sup> are the most servile advocates for a Court, which the Earl treated Charles with such bitterness for consenting to serve.

## TO MASON, Thursday 21 March 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 239-41.

Berkeley Square, March 21, 1782.

YOU and I shall now I think agree on one great point, as I trust we do on most others: you will allow that the constitution is not quite gone when the House of Commons in two months overturns an administration that had taken such deep root. In one word, Lord North at the head of the mercenaries laid down his arms yesterday and surrendered at discretion,<sup>1</sup> the Opposition having refused to listen to any overtures till the constitutional preliminaries that they demanded were granted.<sup>2</sup>

This is precisely all I know, not how the surrender was determined;<sup>3</sup>

excuses, and retiring from the room, shut himself into another chamber, obdurately denying Mr Yorke an audience' (*Mem. Geo. III* iv. 35). Yorke's consequent agitation of mind was believed to have contributed to his death a few days after his acceptance of the seals (*ibid.*).

8. Sir Joseph Yorke (1724-92), K.B., 1761, cr. (1788) Bn Dover, army officer and diplomatist; Hon. John Yorke (1728-1801), 'plain John,' M.P. Higham Ferrers 1753-68, Reigate 1768-84, clerk of the commission of bankruptcy, 1755, commissioner of trade and plantations, 1761, and a lord of the Admiralty, 1765; Rev. and Hon. James Yorke (1730-1808), Bp of St David's, 1774, of Gloucester, 1779, of Ely 1781-1808 (Philip C. Yorke, *Life and Correspondence of Philip Yorke, Earl of Hardwicke*, Cambridge, 1913, *passim*; Collins, *Peerage*, 1812, iv. 490-2; Venn, *Alumni Cantab.*).

1. That is, unconditionally (*OED sub* 'discretion' 5b).

2. Lord Rockingham, in a conversation 14 March with Thurlow, who was conducting the King's negotiations with the Opposition, 'mentioned the measures he

should expect to have adopted, if he came into place—as peace with America, general peace, disqualifying of contractors from sitting in Parliament, and revenue officers from voting at elections, and plans of economy' (*Last Journals* ii. 421; cf. *Corr. Geo. III* v. 392 and George Thomas, Earl of Albemarle, *Memoirs of the Marquis of Rockingham and His Contemporaries*, 1852, ii. 451-3). After North's announcement of the dissolution of the ministry there was a stalemate for several days, until on 25 March the King yielded to the demands of the Opposition (*see post* 23 March *bis* and n. 18).

3. Three long letters (*Corr. Geo. III* v. 394-401) from Lord North to the King, written 18 and 19 March, represented the hopelessness of the administration's position. Concerning the previously announced intention of the Opposition to move on the 20th the withdrawal of confidence from the ministers, and the likelihood that the motion would be carried, North wrote: 'I . . . shall remain in the journals forever stigmatized upon record by a vote of Parliament for my removal' (*ibid.* v. 398).

perhaps from the timidity of the ministers who might see that obstinacy *in the last resort* would draw tenfold danger on their heads.<sup>4</sup> In short the royal yacht was expediting at Deptford!<sup>5</sup> Still I should not wonder if no new arrangement yet took place, provided any of the last set could be hardy enough to rally.

Who are to be the new ministers? I neither know nor care, I mean from personal attachments. If the new mean and *attempt* well, I hope all the friends to their country will assist and support them, ay and have patience, for everything cannot be effected at once—nor anything but a restoration of the state-ministers<sup>6</sup> if there is any division amongst the friends of their country. This is what every art will be used to procure; it has been the grand nostrum of the whole system and will be doubly exerted when they have lost the Treasury.

Time I have not to write more did I know more; nor shall I know more than the rest of the town, for no change shall ever make me connected with any administration, though I will reverence any that retrieves liberty. I have the comfort of seeing that America may be free if it will. It is the only country that ever had an opportunity of choosing its constitution at once; it may take the best one that ever was, ours, and correct its defects. I have been interrupted again, for everybody is running about the town to hear or tell, and this house is in the way of everybody—but I cannot conclude without thanking you again for your present,<sup>7</sup> which is more to my taste than ever present was. It is high-flavoured to the most exquisite degree, in short I cannot express a quarter of what I think. I do not know that you ever pleased me more.

4. North himself seems not to have feared reprisals (*Corr. Geo. III* v. 395), but they were contemplated, and HW had urged Lord Camden and the Duke of Richmond to consider them (*Last Journals* ii. 430).

5. 'The workmen, who were coppering a ship of the line, have been suddenly taken from their work, and are now employed in coppering the King's yacht' (*London Courant* 25 March 1782). In his

*Last Journals* (ii. 421) HW wrote that the King 'not only talked of retiring to Hanover, but it is most certain that for a fortnight together the royal yacht was expeditiously preparing for transporting him.' The letters of the King written at this time suggest that HW's suspicions were largely founded on rumour.

6. Ministers of the King's policies.

7. The *Archæological Epistle*.

## From MASON, Saturday 23 March 1782

Printed from MS now wsl.

*Address* (in unidentified hand): To The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

*Postmark*: WORKSOP 26 MR.

Aston, March 23d, 1782.

I HAVE two letters to thank you for: one by the post, and another by a private hand, and I suppose it likely that a third is on the road, as I have not yet heard from yourself anything concerning the decisive event of the 20th. However I will not wait for that as I shall not probably have time to answer it tomorrow by the return of the post. I think everything that this poor country has now to hope depends on a thorough sweep. If there be any compromise whatever, I own, for myself, I shall expect little permanent good. I wish therefore Lord North had held out longer, that the Opposition by being still more exasperated, had been more firmly united. Other folks<sup>1</sup> I hope will be more *firm* (I think that is the term when applied as I mean it) and that *firmness* may answer the same good purpose. I suppose this present week will be more pregnant with important events than any the nation has beheld since 1688. Nevertheless, I can very philosophically stay here and satisfy myself with the intelligence sent me by you and a few other good friends.

I am sorry that you and I retain different sentiments concerning the only political measure in which I ever publicly concerned myself. However, I perceive you have candour enough to think that whatever I have done or may do in that matter proceeds from an upright intention. I mean to go to York in Easter week to our next Committee meeting.<sup>2</sup> And indeed had I been in town I should *now* have thought it necessary to have gone down thither, though a much longer journey, in order to have preserved, what I hope I shall ever preserve, the character of consistency.

I hope to see Soame Jennyns' book soon and have already intimated to Mr Burgh your wishes on that head, which I don't doubt he

1. Probably, in view of HW's interpretation of this remark, an allusion to the Rockinghams. See *post* 26 March 1782.

2. Mason was present at the meeting of

the Committee of Association of the County of York on the Thursday after Easter, 4 April (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 402). See *post* 6 April 1782.

will attend to.<sup>3</sup> Sir Joshua Reynolds has at last sent me his notes.<sup>4</sup> They are well written and I think will be of service to the art. I mean to put them to press when I go to York so that I hope the whole book will be ready for next winter.

You praise the cheese I sent you so much that I wish

It had been Stilton for your sake.<sup>5</sup>

'Twas the best however that such a country mouse as I could send you, I fancy though you will find few folks that will relish, or even taste it, at present; they have better dainties to feast on. I wish however you would make the experiment on Lord Harcourt,<sup>6</sup> who never I believe eat a bit of that sort of rotten cheese in his life, and will turn up his nose at it. Tell him from me it does not stink half so much as a great deal of the French cheese which he is so fond of.

In one of my letters<sup>7</sup> I had an account that the royal yachts are preparing for immediate service. What can this mean? It cannot be news to you; if it is, you may know it from the person<sup>8</sup> who told you that he could forward a letter from you to

Your most obliged servant and sincere friend,

W. MASON

PS. March 24. Your expected third letter is arrived, but I must own I cannot impute so much to the H. of Commons as you do. They have turned out a ministry I grant you, but only because that

3. Burgh did not attend to them.

4. For his translation of Dufresnoy's *De arte graphica*.

5. 'Once on a time (so runs the fable)  
A country mouse right hospitable  
Received a town mouse at his board,  
Just as a farmer might a Lord.

\* \* \* \* \*

He brought him bacon (nothing lean),  
Pudding that might have pleased a Dean;

Cheese, such as men in Suffolk make,  
But wished it Stilton for his sake'  
(Pope, *Sixth Satire of the Second Book of Horace*, ll. 157-68).

6. Mason had prepared Harcourt for the *Archæological Epistle*: 'I . . . applied

myself to learning a language which I prefer greatly to French and which therefore you will despise. My proficiency in this tongue you will shortly know and be surprised with; in the mean while *Tace! Tace! Tace!*' (Mason to Harcourt 7 March 1782). By 12 April he apparently had not heard from Harcourt, for on that day he wrote, 'I hear that I am suspected of being the author of a certain satirical epistle, of which I trust your Lordship will acquit me,' etc. (MSS in the possession of Viscount Harcourt).

7. Missing. Apparently from Stonhewer. HW's letter (21 March 1782) telling Mason about the royal yacht had not yet reached him.

8. Stonhewer.

ministry could not pay up to the expense of a majority, not from any intrinsic power in the Opposition. There are bounds to corruption, as to the sea, so far can it go and no further. Those bounds are sooner come at than I expected, for I thought that the nation might have answered even a third loan,<sup>9</sup> which I find is not the case. I heartily hope that the next ministry, if it means to proceed on the same plan (and I fear it has not one at present much better) may find some other scheme than loans to amuse an insulted nation. More news pray! more, more, more, more, more. I prayed today (*ex officio*) at Church, and I prayed *silently* for *firmness*.

## TO MASON, Saturday 23 March 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 242-4, 241-2 (see n. 16 below).

March 23, 1782.

Thus far our arms have with success been crowned,  
And Rome in tears.<sup>1</sup>

**I** WAS in the right, I told you division<sup>2</sup> would be attempted and so it has been. Lord Rockingham's constitutional demands not proving palatable, on Thursday evening Lord Shelburne was sent for to a house in the Park<sup>3</sup> and after a parley of three hours, declined;<sup>4</sup> next morning Lord Gower was tried:<sup>5</sup> ditto. At four o'clock today, and this is Saturday, no new step had been taken; if the white flag is not hung out this evening or tomorrow, I do not know what may happen on Monday,<sup>6</sup> nothing that will break your heart or mine.

9. I.e., the third loan initiated by the new Parliament, convened in 1780. The two loans already voted had been severely criticized by the Opposition. See *ante* 9 March 1781 and 28 Feb. 1782.

1. This seems to combine a paraphrase of the first line of Dryden's *Tyrannic Love*, 'Thus far my arms have with success been crowned,' with an echo of Addison's *Cato*, II. ii. 70: 'All Rome will be in tears.' The line from Dryden is quoted in HW to Montagu 23 July 1763 (MONTAGU ii. 88).

2. Of the Opposition; see *ante* 21 March 1782.

3. That is, the King summoned Shelburne to attend him at Buckingham House in St James's Park.

4. Shelburne realized that he could not form a sufficiently strong ministry without the support of the Rockinghams; cf. *Last Journals* ii. 422-4 and Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, *Life of William, Earl of Shelburne*, 1875-6, iii. 130-1.

5. He was 'too indolent and too timid to accept the post' (*Last Journals* ii. 423).

6. The House of Commons adjourned on 20 March to Monday 25 March (*Journals of the House of Commons* xxxviii.

These vain struggles have hampered ten thousand times more: Lord Rockingham may dictate his own terms. The Erse nation is furious at Lord North: Fingal himself told him, 'Remember my Lord, I do not desert you.'<sup>7</sup>

George Selwyn said an excellent thing t'other night. Somebody at White's missing Keene<sup>8</sup> and Williams,<sup>9</sup> Lord North's confidants, asked where they were? 'Setting up with the corpse I suppose,' said Selwyn. This was quite in character for him, who has been joked with for loving to see executions and dead bodies.<sup>10</sup>

Mr Warton's answer to Milles and Bryant is come out.<sup>11</sup> There is good in it, but he does not unfold his arguments sufficiently and, I think, does not take off one or two of Bryant's strongest arguments.<sup>12</sup> At the end he shows that the Dean has strangely disguised the material affair of blacking the parchments. This I take to be the detection Mr Nichols announced.<sup>13</sup> It is no wonder that Mr Warton's answer appeared flat to me, it certainly is not the best answer that has appeared.<sup>14</sup>

If your own curiosity will not lead you to town, it would be in vain for me to solicit you. Folks generally wish they could

904). Unless the King and the Opposition came to terms before its reconvening there would be no government.

7. In *Last Journals* (ii. 422) the King's words are reported as: 'Remember, my Lord, that it is you who desert me, not I you.' On 19 March the King had written to North in a style that makes HW's story plausible: 'Till I have heard what the Chancellor has done from his own mouth, I shall not take any step, and if you resign before I have decided what I will do, you will certainly forever forfeit my regard' (*Corr. Geo. III* v. 397). North's resignation did not, however, cost him the King's friendship. On 27 March the King wrote him: 'I ever did and ever shall look on you as a friend as well as faithful servant' (*ibid.* v. 421; cf. W. Baring Pemberton, *Lord North*, 1938, pp. 351-2).

8. James Whitshed Keene (1732-1822), Lt-Col. in the Portuguese army, 1762; M. P. Wareham 1768-74, Ludgershall, 1774, and Montgomery 1774-1818; m. (1771) Hon. Elizabeth Legge, Lord North's half-sister (*Last Journals* i. 382; *The Diaries of Sylvester Douglas, Lord Glenbervie*, ed. Francis Bickley, 1928, i. 6-7;

W. R. Williams, *The Parliamentary History of the Principality of Wales*, Brecknock, 1895, p. 151; CM 1771, xli. 377).

9. George James ('Gilly') Williams (ca 1719-1805), Selwyn's and HW's intimate friend. See MONTAGU i. 186 n. 26. He was Lady North's uncle.

10. Several of the stories about Selwyn's love of executions, etc., have been brought together by S. Parnell Kerr in *George Selwyn and the Wits*, 1909, pp. 122-30.

11. *An Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems Attributed to Thomas Rowley. In Which the Arguments of the Dean of Exeter, and Mr Bryant, Are Examined*. HW has written on the title-page of his copy (now WSL), beneath the date, 'March 21st.'

12. HW's copy has but two marginal manuscript annotations: 'Thomas' Bentley is corrected to 'Richard' (p. 96), and of Warton's hypothesis concerning Chatterton's 'Asterlagour' HW has remarked: 'I do not thin<k> he has expla<ined> this to satisfac<tion>' (p. 57).

13. Discussed *ante* 9 and 14 Feb. 1782.  
14. That is, Mason's *Archæological Epistle*.



have lived in historic moments, instead of reading them. There is a double reason for being witness to them, when one can, which is, that they who can be spectators, cannot be readers, for the story is not written till they are dead. It is true, most things are in newspapers now as soon as they happen, but so are ten thousand things that have not happened, and who can winnow them, but on the spot? I pity posterity, who will not be able to discern a thousand[th] part of the lies of Macpherson and Bate;<sup>15</sup> but I do not pity you who might know better if you pleased. However, I will not scold you so much as you deserve, because I never can praise you a quarter so much as you deserve. Adieu.

PS. *Vogue la galère!* v. my last.

Monday, 7 o'clock.<sup>16</sup>

Thank God! thank God! what remains of this country and constitution may be saved. No art or industry but has been employed to divide and break the Opposition; Lord Shelburne has resisted<sup>17</sup> nobly and wisely and they triumph together. The Court has yielded completely<sup>18</sup>—though not till this morning, when it had not above three hours left<sup>19</sup> to hold out. Yesterday a struggle was made to add Lords Gower and Weymouth to the new cabinet,<sup>20</sup> even they are given up, and I should think by Lord Weymouth's usual poltroonery. The constitutional points are granted. The new cabinet are to be Lord Thurlow, Chancellor, (*tant pis*),<sup>21</sup> Lord Camden, President, Lord Rockingham, first lord of the Treasury, Admiral Keppel, of

15. Journalists for the Court party (*ante* 18 April 1777, n. 27, and ca 22 Aug. 1778, n. 8). Rev. Henry Bate (later Sir Henry Bate Dudley) (1745–1824), cr. (1813) Bt, 'the Fighting Parson,' was editor of the *Morning Post* until 1780. In June 1781 he had been sentenced to a year's imprisonment for a libel on the Duke of Richmond. For HW's comments on him see *Last Journals* ii. 321, 367, and 442.

16. This postscript was printed by Mitford (followed by Cunningham and Toynbee) with HW's letter of 21 March, but Mason's postscript to his letter of 23 March shows that the letter of 21 March had been delivered before the date of this paragraph: 25 March.

17. The King's invitation to form an

administration, which would have divided the Opposition.

18. To Rockingham's demands. But throughout the negotiations the King refused to see Rockingham, and employed Shelburne as intermediary (*Corr. Geo. III* v. 407–8, 412–3; *Last Journals* ii. 425; Fitzmaurice, op. cit. iii. 131–3).

19. Before the meeting of the House of Commons at noon after its adjournment on 20 March (*Corr. Geo. III* v. 408; Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1237).

20. In his early negotiations with Shelburne the King had urged the inclusion of Gower and Weymouth in the cabinet (Fitzmaurice, op. cit. iii. 130).

21. Thurlow was the only member of North's cabinet to survive the dissolution.

the Admiralty, General Conway, commander-in-chief, Lord Shelburne and Charles Fox, secretaries of state, to whom are to be added the Duke of Richmond as Master of the Ordnance and Lord John Cavendish as chancellor of the Exchequer; not a word has been said of the other places<sup>22</sup> nor do I care a straw who has them. The citadel in general is well garrisoned; and as they cannot hope for favour they must stand on national ground. I have not time to say a syllable more. I could tell you very curious passages but cannot write them<sup>23</sup>—pray be reconciled to the House of Commons—I am sure this is not the *Lords'* doing—though it is marvellous in our eyes.<sup>24</sup> Adieu.

## TO MASON, Tuesday 26 March 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 247–50 (except part of last paragraph; see n. 11 below).

March 26, 1782.

**M**OST certainly I do not agree with you in thinking, that the House of Commons turned out the late ministers solely because the latter had not money enough to purchase the former, this I cannot possibly agree to, because I know to the contrary. The House of Commons have that merit; it cannot be denied to them; and it is as true, that the House did this, though the majority had been bought, and though there was money enough, and enough was offered to buy them over again: but for this time they had virtue enough to reject it, and you are bound as a divine to accept those who have come in at eleven and three-quarters o'clock.<sup>1</sup>

In another point I was quite of your opinion, I wished the contest to last longer, but the victory has been so complete by the other side holding out to eleven and three-quarters too, that three months longer could not have added to it. This was owing to Lord Rocking-

22. A complete list of the new cabinet is in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1238–40.

23. HW in his *Last Journals* (ii. 413–37) has recorded a less circumspect account of the events that attended the formation of the Rockingham ministry.

24. 'This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes' (Psalm 118. 23). HW spells out his pun to Mann 26 March 1782.

1. As in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard (Matthew 20. 1–16). HW seems to be asking Mason to accept the members of Parliament who had acquired enough last-minute virtue to reject bribes, and also the new ministry that had been formed just before noon 25 March (*Corr. Geo. III* v. 408–9; Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1237; *London Courant* 26 March).

ham's own single firmness. He first would not hear of a treaty, till his five national and constitutional points<sup>2</sup> were granted, and at last rejected every reserve, and thus has triumphed without the shadow of a compromise of any sort, this is most religiously true, he deserves all praise and all support; and I do think you will believe me, who think very meanly of his abilities, and have not, nor ever shall have even distant or indirect connection with him, and who have cause to be displeased with him for *more* than personal rudeness to the Duchess of Gloucester,<sup>3</sup> but princes and ministers are all alike to me. I will do justice to them indifferently, and prefer my country and its liberty to either and to both. I do beseech *you* who love both as well as I do, not to change your opinion, but to act with prudence and temper, and not gratify the public enemies with what they are labouring to effect, disunion among the friends of their country. If the new ministers disappoint our hopes by their own faults, they deserve no mercy, but let them be tried. They have everything to undo and to do, and remember, that virtue is their only instrument. Mr Conway wisely and honestly warned them in public, that they must not fight even enemies with the weapon corruption.<sup>4</sup> They must therefore be reasoned with, as they must reason with the nation. Good sense will have weight with a virtuous administration; if they are not a virtuous one—*ora pro nobis*.

I am going to Strawberry to repose after this conflict and to avoid the gossiping of the town on the disposition of places<sup>4a</sup> about which I do not care a straw, nor know one beyond the cabinet. There are various items of retrospect that I should wish, but which I dare to say will be forgotten or thought obsolete in the multiplicity of greater objects, nor shall I have *voix en chapitre*. Mr Conway and the Duke of Richmond are the only two with whom I have more than civil intercourse, and that I shall let dwindle with the others now they

2. The five points listed *ante* 21 March 1782, n. 2.

3. In 1773 'Lord Rockingham did not wait on the Duke and Duchess, on pretence that it would look too like a system of opposition. This refinement served to announce his being the head of the Opposition, and his fear of its incensing the King and preventing his becoming some time or other the head of administration again' (*Last Journals* i. 175).

4. For his own part, he did not think that resorting to corruption, in any one case, even for the good of the state, could be justifiable' (from the report of Conway's speech in the House of Commons 20 March 1782, Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1227).

4a. Previously printed 'plans'; emended by Dr Chapman.

are ministers. In short I can now go to Strawberry without anxiety.

You ask for more and more and more. I could satisfy you, but not in a letter, nor would you believe me easily, though you do not want faith in the sort of things I should tell you. As to promotions and such *mises*, I have told you I do not trouble my head about them. In all probability I shall see much more of my neighbour at Bushy,<sup>5</sup> Lord North, than of any minister. He is very good company. I cannot be suspected of paying court, which I never did in his power: and though I have a very bad opinion of him as a minister, he is so totally out of favour as well as out of place, that methinks that negative merit has its value.<sup>6</sup>

Wednesday 27th.

Perhaps everything I have been saying is useless: perhaps it may not signify a rush what our speculative opinions may be. Since I wrote yesterday the former part of this, I doubt whether the panic is not recovered so much, as to intend not to let the new settlement take place at all. I cannot explain further and desire you to keep this to yourself, but I shall not be surprised if the laying down the arms without any condition was not a feint, an ambuscade of a very serious nature; however, the other side is neither blinded nor off their guard. They see too that they have nothing to expect but every possible insincerity and treachery even if allowed to proceed, which I repeat I doubt, though the principals are to kiss hands today;<sup>7</sup> but we shall find that there is another House that will want correction much more than that of the Commons. The present temper of the latter should be encouraged, not reviled nor split into different opinions, for its weight alone can bear down that of the other. If I do not speak sense and truth, you will scoff my ideas, and if I do not hereafter convince you that I have acted on your own principles, you will have reason to think me a rascal; I have dreaded something worse

5. Bushy (or Bushey) House, in Bushy Park, of which Lady North held the rangership. The Norths lived there during the summer (J. P. Neale, *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen*, 1818-23, v. [pl. XIII]; GEC *sub* Guilford). It is about a mile beyond SH on the road to Hampton Court.

6. HW's prediction that he would see a good deal of Lord North proved true.

His later letters mention frequent visits to Bushy; on 4 Oct. 1787 he wrote to Lady Ossory, 'I dined last Monday at Bushy. . . . Lord North's spirits, good humour, wit, sense, drollery, are as perfect as ever.'

7. HW's fears were unfounded. The new cabinet was received by the King on 27 March (*London Gazette* 30 March 1782).

than I have hinted at, though some time ago I did absolutely tell you I had fears.<sup>8</sup> When I see you I will unfold what I cannot give you a glimpse of now, and which will show you that I have acted very differently from what would be believed.<sup>9</sup> Bring this letter with you and I will unravel all; but nothing was ever less seated than the new administration is yet, you will therefore not be surprised if you hear it is dissolved.

Whatever happens I shall be overjoyed if Mr Burgh condescends to adopt my idea:<sup>10</sup> yet I wish a less vanescent stigma than can be affixed by controversy were imprinted on the old servile buffoon's front. I wish he was beset. Oh! I laughed till I cried.<sup>11</sup>—But I must finish and go out.

From MASON, Saturday 30 March 1782

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: SHEFFIELD 2 AP.

Aston, March 30th, 1782. -

THE hint which you give in the last part of your last quadrates (to use a stiff word,<sup>1</sup> for my style is hardly yet come to itself<sup>2</sup>) with my previous fears; I know not however whether I should call them fears when certain hopes are blended with them. For in case what is expected<sup>3</sup> should happen, I think it would end in what would bring matters to more consistency that ever, and therefore I hope

8. 'I had long dreaded lest success or despair should infuse resolution enough into the King to endeavour to establish absolute power by the army. Had the conquest of America been achieved, I have not the smallest doubt but a triumphant army, returned from subduing the King's enemies, and stigmatized by the Americans as Tories, would have been unboundedly ready to make war on all called Whigs, and all the King should call his enemies' (*Last Journals* ii. 432).

9. *Last Journals* ii. 430-4 indicates that HW here probably means that he favoured Conway rather than his niece's husband, the Duke of Gloucester, for the post of commander-in-chief.

10. Of a confutation of Soame Jenyns's *Disquisitions on Several Subjects*. See *ante* 15 March 1782.

11. The passage 'I wish he . . . cried,' hitherto unprinted, has been supplied from Mitford's manuscript notebook, Add. MSS 32563 fol. 53. HW is referring to the stanza of the *Archæological Epistle* quoted *post* 25 April 1782, n. 2.

1. Mason had used it before in a letter to HW (*ante* 21 Jan. 1781).

2. After the artificial language of the *Archæological Epistle*.

3. That the new administration would not succeed.

full as much as I fear. The chemists will tell you that all heterogeneous mixtures will unite only by strong agitation, and I hardly think there has yet been enough of that to make *the gruel thick and slab*.<sup>4</sup> This puts me in mind of a strange blunder which the author of the *Epistle* which you so much commend has made concerning Macbeth's witch: there is no such phrase to be found in all Shakespeare's play, as that of *spilling much more blood*;<sup>5</sup> and the great Mr Stevens<sup>6</sup> (though an admirer of the poem, and suspected by Dr Johnson of being the author of it) has found out this unpardonable error. Now if I was acquainted with the real author I would vindicate him in this manner, that the passage is to be found in Dryden's additions to that play, for I remember very well to have heard these lines on the stage set to good old music by Matthew Locke:

He must, he will, he shall spill much more blood  
And become worse to make his title good.<sup>7</sup>

I have heard also a pleasant story that Dr Johnson, to whom a present was sent,<sup>8</sup> read the poem before the preface,<sup>9</sup> and thinking all that was said there was ironical, pronounced it to be super-excellent; on reading the preface afterwards he gravely said, 'I find the author is no friend of mine, nevertheless I cannot gainsay his poetical talents.'<sup>10</sup>

Now that you are in your Strawberry retreat before strawberries are even in blossom I think you cannot do better *en attendant* than

4. *Macbeth* IV. i. 32.

5. 'Like Macbeth's witch, bid her "Spill much more blood"' (*Archæological Epistle*, stanza xx).

6. George Steevens.

7. In the second edition of the *Epistle* Mason added the following note on the third line of stanza xx: 'This was left unnoted in the first edition, in order that it might prove a crust to the critics: and if the author is well informed, some of them have mumbled it. They say, and they say truly, that there is no such expression in the play of Shakespeare. But, in the representation of that play, where Dryden's alterations are admitted, for the sake of some very fine old music, which Lock originally set to them, the following chorus . . . is well known . . . :  
"He must, he shall—he will *spill much*

*more blood*,

And become worse to make his title good."

Mason is referring to Sir William Davenant's (not Dryden's) version of *Macbeth* (1674), with music doubtfully attributed to Matthew Locke (ca 1630-77), which held the boards until 1744. The lines Mason quotes (slightly paraphrased) are in Davenant's *Macbeth* II. v. 34-7 (G. C. D. Odell, *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving*, New York, 1920, i. 340, ii. 274; Grove's *Dictionary of Music*, sub Locke; *Macbeth* [Variorum Edition], ed. H. H. Furness, 1901, p. 324).

8. Probably by Mason himself.

9. In the preface Mason speaks of Johnson's 'rugose, cacophonous, and dentifragent' style and accuses him of being a hireling pensioner of the Court.

10. This anecdote seems to be otherwise unrecorded.

spare a leisure hour in turning once more a commentator, that a certain future edition of *later works* may not be defective.<sup>11</sup>

I mean to set off towards York tomorrow as soon as *mes pâques* are here finished. What sort of meeting there will be between the Chancellor of the Exchequer<sup>12</sup> and me I can hardly guess, considering we go on somewhat different business.<sup>13</sup> However you may depend upon my behaviour both to him and others to be such as shall not justly be deemed offensive, and I have great reason to think from the temper in which I have found Mr Duncombe (who called upon me yesterday) and some others of my brethren in iniquity, that all our proceedings will be as temperate, as we think them constitutional.

You have a new accession if you please to your list of noble authors in the Earl of Effingham,<sup>14</sup> who has just printed a little pamphlet called *An Essay on the Nature of a Loan*,<sup>15</sup> which better judges than I am think extremely clear and well written. It was printed at York<sup>16</sup> and I fancy by this time is to [be] had at Debrett's.<sup>17</sup> To those who know the man and his conversation it will be a great curiosity. In my own opinion he has talents for *everything*, did not his way of life make him nothing.<sup>18</sup>

I mean to return here in a week's time; if anything in the meanwhile should occur a letter will find me at the deanery. With a thousand thanks for all your intelligence and other favours and partialities I conclude,

Most truly yours,

W.M.

11. That is, HW should add his commentary on the *Archæological Epistle*. See *post* 2 April 1782.

12. Lord John Cavendish, holder of the office in the new cabinet.

13. Cavendish's appointment automatically vacated his Parliamentary seat for the city of York and necessitated his re-election, which took place at York 3 April 1782 (*Members of Parliament*, pt ii, 1878, p. 171). Mason's business was to attend a meeting of the Committee of Association on 4 April (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 402), discussed *post* 6 April 1782.

14. Mason had nominated Effingham

seven years earlier (*ante* 17 June 1775) for a place in *Royal and Noble Authors*, but HW did not admit him.

15. Published anonymously; HW has written in the name of the author on the title-page of his copy, now wsl.

16. At the press of Ann Ward, Mason's printer.

17. John Debrett (d. 1822), compiler and bookseller, took over the business of John Almon in 1781. His shop 'continued to be the resort of the Whigs' (DNB).

18. His intemperance and sporting tastes are mentioned *ante* 17 June 1775.

## TO MASON, Monday 1 April 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 253-6.

Berkeley Square, April 1, 1782.

YOU will be perfectly content with the new administration if it can hobble on even for a short time, which however I must doubt. The Duke of Richmond is a man after your own heart, and after mine too, though I do not approve of his visions more than of yours,<sup>1</sup> which seem to be the same; but when men have the same ends I do not quarrel with the means, on the contrary, I am so desirous of union amongst the upright, that I am for acquiescence and temper, as the enemies are still both numerous and potent (potent because numerous) and labouring to sow division which they would enjoy and profit of. There is to be a committee of the House of Commons chosen to examine into its decays, and study a remedy, which when fixed on, the ministers will support! I may not be accurate in my definition, but this is the purport.<sup>2</sup> If I gave loose to my own speculations, I should say that when a house is tumbling it will not save it to new-furnish one of the apartments, much less when there are people in two other chambers undermining the upholsters. The Chancellor<sup>3</sup> it is said declares against the constitutional bills,<sup>4</sup> and will Lord Shelburne cordially promote them?<sup>5</sup> In short I

1. The Duke of Richmond was an advocate of the reforms urged by the Yorkshire Association, particularly of the proposals for annual Parliaments and for more equitable representation (*Last Journals* ii. 380 and 438). Mason approved of Richmond's policies at this time, but had earlier suspected that the Duke was no true friend of the Association (*ante* 12 July 1780 and *post* 6 April 1782).

2. '4th [April 1782]. There was a meeting of the associators at York. They agreed to trust the new ministers at least for the present, and adjourned for a year to give them a fair trial. A principal inducement to this temper [was], that the Duke of Richmond, who had given in to the wildest visions of the right of every man to vote for representatives, had extorted an unwilling engagement from his

fellows, the other ministers, that a committee of the House of Commons should be appointed to examine, and, if they could agree on any system (which was most unlikely in such a chaos of opinions and interests, which last are opinions) to settle a new and juster mode of representation—an engagement diverted by the subsequent schisms, and forgotten in the flat rejection of the demands of the Associations' (*Last Journals* ii. 438).

3. Thurlow.

4. Bills executing the measures insisted upon by Rockingham to diminish the alleged unconstitutional influence of the Crown (*ante* 21 March 1782). Cf. HW to Mann 5 May 1782, *Last Journals* ii. 430 and 442, and Sir N. W. Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs of His Own Time*, 1836, iii. 50.

5. HW suspected Shelburne of harbour-



see such seeds of mischief already sown, and the vanquished are so far from wearing an air of defeat that I have not the smallest expectation of duration to the new system. The watchword Republicanism is given out against it, and grievous complaints made of the hardships, violences, and insults put on the Crown. Lord Rockingham was not admitted even to an audience before the moment of his kissing hands,<sup>6</sup> and much resistance I am told is made to a large creation of peers,<sup>7</sup> who might a little balance the Household troops<sup>8</sup> in that garrison. The high priests and Scotch peers countenanced *against* the ministers, will baffle any good that can be attempted. In the mean time public distresses will pour in from all quarters, and if peace cannot be attained, I see no prospect of anything but ruin, which if the new ministers stay, will be imputed to them; but I believe the true authors will soon have an opportunity and the honour of completing their work reinforced by part of the new administration, who will not return to Opposition if accomplices in blowing up the new settlement; a plan that does not seem to be disguised.

This is enough to say on a transient interlude; it is better however than if they had been smiled into hopes of favour. They see how ungracious they are. It is determined that they shall not be pleased with their situation, that they shall be clogged in every attempt to please the country, and consequently it is hoped that the country will not be pleased; of all this they are aware, but they will be wiser than I if they can do what they are hindered from doing, and if they can do what will be expected from them, though they will not be enabled to do it. Thus the way is paved for the return of the old again, and I shall be much surprised if the present administration receive a quarter's salary; however that point will be sooner cleared up. If they are permitted to do no good, the same influence can dis-

ing treacherous intentions toward the new ministry (HW to Mann 26 March 1782 and *Last Journals* ii. 436, 440-1, and 443-4).

6. 'The King consented to take Lord Rockingham, and his Lordship's arrangement; but—is that credible?—would not see him. All was transacted by the medium of Lord Shelburne. He carried the messages backwards and forwards' (*Last Journals* ii. 425). This is confirmed by *Corr. Geo. III* v. 408-9.

7. 'Fifteen new peers, it is said, will be forthwith created' (*London Chronicle* 26-8 March 1782, li. 304). This design on the part of the new ministry to offset the King's advantage in the House of Lords was thwarted. During the four months of Rockingham's administration five English peers were created (*Royal Kalendar*, 1783, pp. 10, 14).

8. That is, the peers who supported the King's policies.

possess them again, therefore you will have better evidence than my conjectures. If the country cannot support them, the predominance of the Crown is incontrovertible. It will be beggarly majesty indeed, considering that almost everything else is gone; but a crown is precious in some eyes though set with thorns and stripped of its diamonds.

Do not wonder if I write seldomer, for I shall now be much at Strawberry, where I have been three days. I shall know no more than you will see in the papers. I have no connection with anything called a minister more than I had two months ago, except the Duke of Richmond and Mr Conway, and they have so much to do in their own department that I shall see very little even of them.

Unpolitically we are alarmed about the caterpillars which threaten us with famine at least. The servants I could employ and the boys I could hire have been picking the nests in my grounds these three days. If there are any in your region you must have the twigs cut off and burnt with great care not to scatter for fear of spreading them, and no time is to be lost as they are hatching.<sup>9</sup>

Your favourite Lady Laura is to be married to her cousin Lord Chewton,<sup>10</sup> an excellent young man, but very poor, still we are all much pleased.

I direct to York, for you said you should be there this week.

9. HW had probably seen an alarming advertisement printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for March 1782, addressed 'To the ministers, churchwardens, and overseers of every parish,' warning of the danger of plague resulting from the recent influx of caterpillars: 'A few days may put it out of human power to stop the dreadful effects of these poisonous and destructive insects, which will render vegetables, flesh, and the milk of our cattle dangerously unwholesome. . . . Send out labourers to clear the hedges before it is too late; it should be done by cutting off the little twigs upon which these bags are fixed, and a proper person should be ap-

pointed to see them burnt in an open place' (GM 1782, lii. 152). A correspondent in the next issue contradicted the author of the advertisement and reassured the readers that the danger from the caterpillars was limited to their ravages of the fruit crop (*ibid.* 173-4). Other references to the caterpillars may be found in *London Chronicle* 4-6 April and *Lloyd's Evening Post* 15-17 April 1782.

10. George Waldegrave (1751-89), styled Vct Chewton 1763-84; 4th E. Waldegrave, 1784; m. (5 May 1782, at Gloucester House) Lady Elizabeth Laura Waldegrave. She had carried a letter from HW to Mason in 1778 (*ante* 11 Oct. 1778).

## TO MASON, Tuesday 2 April 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 256-60.

April 2, 1782.

THOUGH I wrote to you but last night, I must write again to tell you the extreme satisfaction you have given me by a letter I have just received,<sup>1</sup> in which you say your county will act with temper. Never were temper and wisdom more necessary than at this moment, the only one we may ever have and in which every devil is at work to divide us, and half Styx at work to calumniate our party and represent us as worse levellers than John of Leyden<sup>2</sup> and his anabaptists. I should regard the latter with contempt were there no danger of the other. I do therefore dread more being exacted and expected from the new ministers, than will depend on them to perform, clogged with Judases, thwartable by the House of Lords and standing on no foundation but a *quicksand*. The D. of Richmond is as firmly yours as you can wish, in truth even more than you will like, for his exceeding scrupulousness and abstract notions, will I fear, counteract one *capital point*<sup>3</sup> that I desire as much as you. I cannot explain myself here; you must bring me my letters for many solutions.<sup>4</sup> The Chancellor of the Exchequer I have not seen since he has been so, nor knew he was going to York but by yours. I have neither attachment to nor connection with any ministers, but my two friends,<sup>5</sup> nor shall ever see any of the others. I write from my own opinions and principles, and can have no view but that of serving the cause at my heart; I never shall profit by any minister or ministry. I am ready to part with anything, and one day or other you will know my sincerity and disinterestedness,<sup>6</sup> but I scorn ostentation, and am content to do the thing that is right.

I am highly diverted with your story of Johnson; but like him, I

1. Mason's letter of 30 March.

2. Johann Buckholdt (Beukelz, Bockelszoon, and other forms of the name are found) (ca 1508-36), called from his place of birth 'John of Leyden'; leader of the anabaptists, a sect holding radical social and political beliefs.

3. The punishment of the outgoing ministers. 'No man living was more averse

to *capital* punishments than I, but I had earnestly pressed the Duke [of Richmond] to proceed to stigmatizing censures and fines' (*Last Journals* ii. 430).

4. A similar hint occurs *ante* 26 March 1782.

5. Conway and the Duke of Richmond.

6. Doubtless an allusion to HW's memoirs.

must do justice: I admire him for not retracting his applause. But he surprises me by suspecting Steevens. Nobody else guesses but one author:<sup>7</sup> and when I wonder at their guess, and plead that person's extreme indolence, and how impossible that he should take such pains, they cry, 'But who else is capable of writing so well?' Is it possible to answer *that* with truth? For the comment<sup>8</sup> you honour me by requiring, I will with pride undertake it, if you accept of me, but I give you notice that I decay every day, inwardly as well as outwardly, nay I have nothing left but my thumbs that are not lame, and I tremble lest I should soon be quite incapable of using my hands at all; you must send me or bring me the other comment, for I kept no copy of it,<sup>9</sup> nor remember a syllable of it, nor the style, and I should wish it to be as uniform as I can make it in my present debility, and without repetitions.

Who is Mr Duncombe? Consider how few persons I see and how little I know beyond my own sphere. All my labours tend to preserve union, that if the present system blows up, as I apprehend it will, a respectable force may remain together, or our victory has destroyed us. Charles Fox has acted a manly and most sensible part; and said the most necessary thing where it was most requisite; but this is one of the things to be explained hereafter.<sup>10</sup> I wish you had not been so positive, but would have come to town. It is impossible to write all, and what cannot be written is the most essential.

I must add a curious history, connected with our present politics, and only for your own ear, as I would by no means hurt the person concerned. When I attended the theatre about Mr Jephson's play,<sup>11</sup> Mr Harris asked me, I thought accidentally, what I thought of Mr Bentley's harlequinade, *The Wishes*.<sup>12</sup> I commended it to the skies

7. I.e., Mason.

8. Notes on the *Archæological Epistle*, requested of HW by Mason *ante* 30 March 1782. If HW wrote any, they have not been found.

9. Whatever may have been the state of the notes at the time of this letter, HW at some time wrote out his commentary on Mason's poems in interleaved copies of printed editions (Mason's *Satirical Poems* 3). See preliminary note, *ante* May 1779.

10. The particular episode that HW had in mind is not made clear later in the correspondence or in *Last Journals*. It

may have been something said or done in support of recriminatory measures against the fallen ministry (*Last Journals* ii. 430).

11. *The Count of Narbonne* (*ante* 7 Nov. 1781).

12. Written ca 1759 and first acted 27 July 1761 (HW to Montagu 18 June and 28 July 1761, MONTAGU i. 372-3, 381-2 and n. 1). It has apparently never been printed. There is a manuscript copy, with 'numerous corrections and insertions,' in the Larpent Collection of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California (Dougald MacMillan, *Catalogue of the Larpent Plays*, San Marino, 1939, p. 35).

as it deserved; shortly after I received a letter from the author,<sup>13</sup> reciting what I had said to Mr H., telling me it was to be revived and desiring leave, with many compliments on my *excellent* taste and judgment, to send it to me for revisal. I replied *bonnement*, that I had said what I thought and what I always had said, and with no idea of its being repeated to him, and I consented to receive the copy, at the same time telling him the faults I recollected and which I intended to mark for correction. Judge of my astonishment when I found some admirable scenes totally omitted, many of the best traits of wit that I have often repeated cashiered, and the whole interlarded and converted into the most gross, most illiberal, and most vulgar libel on the Opposition and in particular on the City of London! It is true that affecting impartiality there were some strokes levelled at the ministers, but which they would well have forgiven, for the satire fell chiefly on their pusillanimity for not having hanged their chief opponents as traitors, rebels, spies and confederates of France. It is also true that amidst this billingsgate, there was humour that made me laugh. I instantly lapped up the packet, told the author that he had totally spoiled his piece and that I could not possibly have anything to do with a composition of that sort. Mr Harris came to me again. I cut him short and asked him how he could imagine I would be concerned in abuse on my friends. Well! the piece was announced, and the road strewn with garlands; but behold the administration was defeated!—the palm-branches gathered up and the piece withdrawn.<sup>14</sup> On Friday as I went to Strawberry I saw Mr Harris at his own door at Knightsbridge: I stopped, and smiled, and said, 'So, Sir, *The Wishes* are withdrawn.' 'Lord, Sir,' said he, 'we should have had the house pulled down.'

13. HW's correspondence with Bentley on this subject is missing.

14. It was eventually acted 3 Oct. 1782 at Covent Garden, but was not a success (Genest vi. 262). HW preserved a clipping of the 'Prologue to *The Wishes*, spoken by Mr Lee Lewes, in the character of Harlequin.' He wrote at the top, 'Oct. 1782. By Mr Bentley,' and beneath the clipping, 'This piece, which originally was full of wit, was written by Richard Bentley, Esq., and was acted twice [five times] by a very bad set of summer players at Drury Lane in 1761 or -2, but did not succeed. It had been now much altered and made

political to abuse the Opposition and that party in the City, and was quite spoiled, and was damned the first night' (from HW's 'Collection of Prologues and Epilogues . . . from the year 1780,' now wsl.). There is another clipping in the same collection, dated by HW 'Oct. 5, 1782' and headed 'Covent Garden Theatre,' which begins, 'As personal allusions and party views have been attributed to the dramatic satire, called *The Wishes*, the author thinks he cannot so effectively disclaim them as by entirely withdrawing the piece.' This is followed by a detailed summary of the plot.

I must so far justify Mr Bentley that I am persuaded there was more sincere zeal than interest in this outrageous invective. He always was, not by education certainly, a Tory by principle; even when he lived at Strawberry, we frequently had disputes then.

Do not mention this story, for his play may appear hereafter and he wants the profits from it. Should there be tolerable times, he nor the manager will risk the ribaldry. If there are not, it will be thickened and will suit the Augustan age in which it will appear, while the author like those of *Hudibras* and of *Absalom and Achitophel* will have prostituted their talents for a butt of sack and a wretched stipend ill paid.<sup>15</sup> Adieu!

From MASON, Saturday 6 April 1782

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: YORK 8 AP.

Memoranda by HW:

Ch. Fox.

Ld Harc.

Ld Cholm. Vergen. Draper.

Eden.<sup>1</sup>

York, April 6th, 1782.

**I** THANK you for your last two letters, the former of which was of good service, as I ventured to report out of it (but without naming my correspondent) the piece of news concerning 'that committee which was to meet to examine into the *decays*,'<sup>2</sup> etc., which I found highly acceptable to all who heard it.

15. Both Butler and Dryden failed to receive the rewards they expected. The 'butt of sack' refers to the honorarium of Dryden's laureateship.

1. Doubtless these are notes for a letter, though none has been found that mentions all of them. Fox and Eden appear in *post* 13 April 1782. 'Lord Cholm.' is presumably HW's grand-nephew George James Cholmondeley (1749-1827), 4th E. of Cholmondeley, cr. (1815) M. of Cholmondeley, who, in HW's opinion, was unjustly neglected in the distribution of places at the formation of the new minis-

try (*Last Journals* ii. 441). Sir William Draper (1721-87), lieutenant-governor of Minorca during the siege of 1781-2, blamed the governor, Hon. James Murray, for the loss of the island, and later brought formal charges against him (HW to Mann 7 April 1782). 'Vergen' is presumably Charles Gravier (1719-87), Comte de Vergennes, but he does not appear at this time in any letters of HW that have been found.

2. Sent to Mason by HW 1 April 1782. Mason gave the news to the Yorkshire Committee of Association.

I now send you our resolutions<sup>3</sup> which I hope you will think as temperate as any that could be made without totally giving up the object for which we are associated, for you will see in the third<sup>4</sup> that we do not at present, i.e., at our general *county* meeting which cannot be before next Christmas,<sup>5</sup> mean to push more than one of our objects; the shortening the duration of Parliament being not there mentioned, and for the other, which we do mean to push, I believe we have a majority of the present cabinet in its favour.

My fears forewent your former letter, for I thought I perceived, from a short parenthesis in an account which Lord John gave to the Dean<sup>6</sup> and I of the manner in which the change came about, that the seeds of jealousy<sup>7</sup> which a certain great personage<sup>8</sup> had not sown, but watered, were sprouting; and this I dread more than any machinations of the fallen party.

The enclosed account gives you only the proceedings of Thursday. Yesterday we did little more than fix the day of our adjournment, which is the 31st of October. I moved a resolution to this purpose, that in case any manœuvres of the late corrupt ministry or their tools and adherents should so far succeed as to break the present arrangement of that administration in which we have justly put so much confidence, that then the sub-committee should call us together again on the shortest notice in order that a general meeting of the county might be called immediately to take every efficacious step (within the bounds of legality) to support the men and measures which we had already declared that we *only* put confidence in for the support of our liberty and property etc., but this resolution was thought to convey a doubt of the permanency of the present system, and therefore we adjourned to the above day 'subject however to an earlier call of any five of our members.'<sup>9</sup>

3. Of the committee, reported in Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 403-5. Mason's enclosure is missing.

4. The third resolution was 'That this committee, conceiving the task of government in the present moment to be arduous beyond the difficulty experienced in any former period, and being anxious to mark their high respect and deference to ministers who stand voluntarily pledged to the nation for the reduction of the undue influence of the Crown, doth postpone to their next meeting their resolution to call a general meeting of the county of

York, in order to submit to that great body of freeholders the necessity of presenting a petition to Parliament in the course of the next session, for a redress of that fundamental grievance, the unequal representation of the people in Parliament' (*ibid.* i. 404).

5. The county meeting was held 19 Dec. 1782 (Wyvill, *Political Papers* ii. 38-71).

6. John Fountayne, Dean of York.

7. Between Rockingham and Shelburne.

8. The King.

9. 'Resolved, That this committee do

—To change the subject let me tell you that you never used a weaker argument in your life than that of the indolence of a certain author. The case in which you urged it admits more indolence than any other. The idlest cook-maid in the kingdom may make a pudding if any of her fellow *sarvants* will pick the plums and make them ready to mix with the batter. She has nothing to do then but stir them about and tie them tight in the pudding-bag. So no more at present from

Your sinceare frind till dethe,

CATHERINE CULLINDAR

Your story from the playhouse is a curious one. I suppose I have 'scaped a scouring, for I guess the flirts at my poor Greek chorus<sup>10</sup> would have been retained, for they were really excellent. I shall keep the secret.

### To MASON, Saturday 6 April 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 262–7. The day of the month is not given, but 'Saturday' can only be the 6th, since Mason replied to it on the 10th.

Saturday night, late, April [6], 1782.

I HAVE so overwhelmed you with letters lately, that this shall be a very short one; but when you have pleased me, I must tell you so. I met Lord John Cavendish this evening at Gloucester House; he told me how obligingly you had behaved to him, and how wise and temperate your resolutions had been; you have done all I wished, which was to allow time for trial. If new ministers act like the old they deserve no favour, and of all men I shall not be their apologist. Their own sense, I should think, would tell them that they can never be favourites were they desirous, for the last have made it

adjourn to Thursday the 31st day of October next, subject to an earlier call by the sub-committee, or by the chairman, at the requisition of any five members' (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. 406).

10. In his *Elfrida* and *Caractacus*. A satirical prologue to the early version of *The Wishes*, which was withdrawn before

the first performance, brought in Gray. See MONTAGU i. 373 and 382 for HW's account of the play's presentation and the suppressed prologue. The fifth act 'was revived by a delightful burlesque of the ancient chorus' (MONTAGU i. 382), and it is doubtless to this that Mason here refers.



impossible for any successors to merit equal grace: we have neither dominions, money nor credit enough to sacrifice on the altar of flattery to render the idol so propitious as it was to the predecessors. If these sincerely attempt reparation, *and continue united*, their labours may produce some good, and that good and those effects may maintain them. To those reflections I leave them; I shall neither be of their councils nor council for them, if they prove not what they ought to be.

I wish it was possible to give you a full account of a tragedy<sup>1</sup> that has just been lent to me, an adequate one is totally impossible. The Bishop-Count of Bristol,<sup>2</sup> whom I met t'other night at Mrs Delany's, desired to send me a play, that he confessed he thought equal to the noblest flights of Shakespeare. Such an honour was not to be refused. Arrived the thickest of quartos, full as the egg of an ostrich; with great difficulty I got through it in two days. It is on the story of Lord Russel. John Lilburne<sup>3</sup> himself could not have more Whig-zeal. The style extremely deficient in grammar is flogged up to more extravagant rants than Statius's or Claudian's, with a due proportion of tumbles into the kennel. The devils and damnation supply every curse with brimstone, and hell's sublime is coupled with Newgate, St James's and Stocks Market;<sup>4</sup> every scene is detached, and each as long as an act; and every one might be omitted without interrupting the action, for plot or conduct there is none. Jefferies and Father Petre open the drama, and scourge one another up to the blackest pitch of iniquity. They are relieved by Algernon Sidney and Lord Howard;<sup>5</sup> the first rants like a madman and damns the other to the

1. *Lord Russell, a Tragedy*, by the Rev. Thomas Stratford (see *post* 14 April 1782 and n. 1), was first acted at Drury Lane 20 Aug. 1784 and ran for four nights (Genest vi. 303). It was privately printed, posthumously, in Dublin, probably in 1794 (BM Cat.), for the benefit of the author's sister, Agnes, as the title-page announces. The printed version differs greatly from the play that HW here describes.

2. Frederick Augustus Hervey, Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry.

3. John Lilburne (ca 1614–57), 'the idol of the mob' (DNB).

4. 'A market for fish and flesh in Walbrook Ward, on the site of the present Mansion House. It was established in 1282

... "where some time had stood . . . a pair of stocks for punishment of offenders." . . . The Stocks Market remained a market for the sale of meat and fish until destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. When rebuilt it was converted into a market for fruit and vegetables' (*London Past and Present* iii. 316–7). The market was removed to Farringdon Street in 1737.

5. William Howard (d. 1694), 3d Bn Howard of Escrick, 1678, was implicated in the Rye House plot and turned informer against Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney. In the printed version of the play the meeting of Sidney and Howard is in the second scene of the third act.

pit of hell. Lady Russell is not a whit less termagant. The good Earl of Bedford<sup>6</sup> on the contrary is as patient as Job, and forgets the danger of his son to listen to the pathetic narrative of his old steward, whose wife had been Lord Russel's nurse and died at seeing him sent to the Tower.<sup>7</sup> The second act begins<sup>8</sup> and never ends with Lord Bedford's visit to Newgate, where he gives money to the jailer for leave to see his son.<sup>9</sup> The jailer chouses him, calls himself Emperor of Newgate, and promises to support his dignity by every act of royal tyranny: compares himself to Salmoneus,<sup>10</sup> and talks of nabobs, Stocks Alley,<sup>11</sup> and Whitfield.<sup>12</sup> Lord Russel comes to the grate, gives more money equally in vain. At last the monarch-jailer demands £1000, Russel promises it: the jailer tenders a promissory note. Lord Russel takes it to sign and find[s] it stipulates £7000, and so on. King Charles and the Duke of York enter, quarrel about religion,<sup>13</sup> but agree on cutting Lord Essex's throat,<sup>14</sup> with many such pathetic amenities. The last act contains the whole trial *verbatim*,<sup>15</sup> with the pleadings of the Attorney- and Solicitor-Generals;<sup>16</sup> Tillotson and Burnet are called to the prisoner's character,<sup>17</sup>—in vain,—he is condemned. Lord Bedford falls at the King's feet begging his son's life, the King tells him he teases him to death, and that he had rather be still in Scotland listening to nine-hours' sermons delivered

—Through the funnel

Of noses lengthened down into proboscis.<sup>18</sup>

6. Lord Russell's father.

7. The old steward and his wife are omitted from the printed play. His place was probably taken by a character called 'Hubert,' represented as a faithful friend of the Russells.

8. In the printed version, Lord Bedford's visit to the Tower does not take place until the third scene of the second act.

9. The attempted bribery and the jailer's extravagant behaviour are omitted from the printed play.

10. In Greek mythology the presumptuous rival of Zeus, ultimately slain by a thunderbolt.

11. This would seem to be the playwright's name for 'Change Alley.

12. Perhaps a mistake for George Whitehead (ca 1636–1723), Quaker, who fought for liberty of conscience and spent much of his early life in prison.

13. In the first scene of the third act.

14. Arthur Capell (1632–83), 2d Bn Capell, 1649; cr. (1661) E. of Essex; imprisoned for complicity in the Rye House plot; found dead with his throat slashed in the Tower. The Whigs believed that he was murdered. This incident occurs in the second scene of the fifth act in the printed play.

15. Not in the printed version.

16. Sir Robert Sawyer (1633–92), Kt, 1677, was attorney-general 1681–87; Heneage Finch (ca 1649–1719), 2d son of 1st E. of Nottingham, cr. (1714) E. of Aylesford, was solicitor-general 1679–86.

17. 'The Duke of Somerset, . . . Dr Tillotson, Dr Burnet, and Dr Fitzwilliams spoke to the general excellence of Lord Russell's character' (Lord John Russell, *The Life of William, Lord Russell*, 3d edn, 1820, ii. 57).

18. Omitted from the printed play.

This is the only flower I could retain of so dainty a garland; the piece concludes with Lady Russel's swooning on hearing the two strokes of the axe.<sup>19</sup> Now you are a little acquainted with our second Shakespeare! Be assured that I have neither exaggerated in the character given, nor in the account of this tedious but very diverting tragedy, which as the Earl-Bishop told me Mr Cumberland has had a mind to fit to the stage;<sup>20</sup> what a hissing there would be between his ice and this cataract of sulphur. Adieu. I have broken my word and wrote a volume, but my pen was hurried on by the torrent of lava.

PS. Cumberland himself has just published a lovely book,<sup>21</sup> which will keep cold, though seasoned like his Calypso's potion for Telemachus, *with the hot Hesperian fly*<sup>22</sup> disguised as an *humble* bee, but really a wasp.<sup>23</sup> Like Soame Jennyns' anodyne<sup>24</sup> too it was intended for *better times*.<sup>25</sup>

There is a very sensible confutation of Dean Milles in the *Monthly Review* for March,<sup>26</sup> which I never heard of till yesterday. Happy for him, if he were only confuted.<sup>27</sup>

PS. I was going to seal my letter when I received yours,<sup>28</sup> which obliges me to add more last words; your conduct and measures were

19. In the printed version Lady Russel swoons, but there is no mention of the two strokes of the axe. The play ends with a soliloquy by Russell's faithful friend, Hubert.

20. See *post* 14 April 1782.

21. Publication of Richard Cumberland's *Anecdotes of Eminent Painters in Spain during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries; with Cursory Remarks upon the Present State of Arts in that Kingdom*, 'in two small volumes,' was announced in the *London Courant* 6 April 1782. HW's copy was sold SH v. 244.

22. In Cumberland's masque, *Calypso*, first acted 20 March 1779 and printed in the same year, one of Calypso's daemons, concocting a potion for Telemachus, recites:

I've gleanings of Hesperian fruit  
With rank Satyrion's guilty root;  
These with the hot Hispanian fly  
Shall make his languid pulse beat high'  
(III. i. 176-9).

The mistake of 'Hesperian' may be Mitford's. HW's copy of *Calypso* is now wsl.

HW commented on these same lines to Cole 28 March 1779, COLE ii. 150.

23. HW comments further on Cumberland's waspishness *post* 13 April 1782.

24. His *Disquisitions on Several Subjects*: see *ante* 15 March 1782.

25. Before the Court party was defeated.

26. The *Monthly Review* for March 1782 (lxvi. 206-19) contains the first part of a review of Milles's *Poems Supposed to Have Been Written . . . by Rowley*, written by Rev. Samuel Badcock (1747-88), theologian and literary critic. It is included in HW's collection of Chattertoniana, now wsl, and is described in CHATTERTON 360. The conclusion of the review did not appear until May (lxvi. 321-34). See B. C. Nangle, *The Monthly Review, First Series 1749-1789: Indexes of Contributors and Articles*, Oxford, 1934, pp. 2 and 176.

27. An oblique compliment to the *Archæological Epistle*.

28. Presumably Mason's of 6 April, postmarked in London 8 April. HW ob-

still wiser than I had heard in the very short conversation which I had with Lord John in our *pinchbeck Drawing-Room*.<sup>29</sup> I approve much your guarding against the late ministers and their tools, nay, I should not differ with you on shorter Parliaments; I should like five years, and consent to three, never to *annual*, which would be *anarchical*. My great repugnance would be to any alteration of the constitution of the House of Commons. Besides that the present has retrieved its character and that of Parliaments, I am rootedly against touching the construction. Considering that we have no sacred law but precedents, if once we should begin to alter foundations, any evil might be copied thence. I do not defend precedents as such, but as they become sacred. If the nation believed that its liberty was maintained by witchcraft, I would not make an act against sorcery. I therefore tell you honestly, that I am sorry the Duke of Richmond is so eager for his committee, and that I hope it will not succeed. Indeed I am persuaded that it will produce nothing but variety of opinion, but they may create division, which is the great object of the great enemy, but enough of that at present. I am sure of my letters you must be sick,—well I shall be little here; I am going to Strawberry that I may hear no more politics. Whenever my friends are landed I trouble my head no more about them. I have not seen the Duke of Richmond or Mr Conway this week, the rest I do not intend to see again, so I could learn nothing but of camps or gunpowder,<sup>30</sup> which I defy either of them to make me understand or listen to.

### FROM MASON, Wednesday 10 April 1782

Printed from MS now WSL.

Aston, April 10th, 1782.

I HAVE sent by this post to Mr Stonhewer under Mr Fraser's cover at the Secretary's office my 'Essay on Cathedral Music' who will convey it to you after he has read it. You will, I trust find your friend Sir John touched with a very light hand, and you will find too a biographical chart on one page,<sup>1</sup> which single page cost me more

viously did not finish the letter on 'Saturday night,' when he began it.

29. I.e., the Duchess of Gloucester's.

30. Conway was commander-in-chief; Richmond, Master of the Ordnance.

1. Mason's chart on p. xiii has a scale of years from 1500 to 1770 running across the top, and the names of thirty English composers arranged beneath in such a way as to show their relative periods. At





trouble than twenty plum-puddings<sup>2</sup> would have done, and is an irrefragable confutation of your aspersion concerning my indolence. I know not whether you will give that page its due applause, but if you do not, Kirgate I am sure will, for my printer holds it a masterpiece in the typographical way.

On my return hither I found a letter which I cannot help enclosing to you<sup>3</sup> as it comes from the brother<sup>4</sup> of a wife who you know was once so very dear to me, and whose memory will ever sit closest to my heart. I feel when I am doing this, that I am doing what I would not do for myself, yet which for her sake I cannot help doing. The place in question is the storekeeper of the garrison at Hull and is I believe reckoned at two hundred a year.<sup>5</sup> All that is said in the letter is I believe strictly true, the old man<sup>6</sup> is upwards of seventy, but having lost his memory and being naturally of a strong constitution may hold out many years, as such persons (who are divested of all mental cares) usually do. The young man (who is about 40) was in trade as a wholesale ironmonger in London, and about fourteen years ago, finding his business decline, gave it up before he was necessitated so to do, and retired to take care of his father. This was soon after his sister died;<sup>7</sup> on this account, as her small fortune of two thousand pounds was in the father's hands, I let it remain there, and the family have since enjoyed it, as I never permitted him to pay me any interest, keeping only the son's bond for the principal that in case of any failure I might save something for his two children. In my will I have cancelled the bond itself.<sup>8</sup> I mention this merely to show you the state of the family and how eligible such an exchange would be could it be procured, for if the father

the bottom four 'Italian masters' are similarly shown. See illustration.

2. Verses (*ante* 6 April 1782).

3. The enclosure was sent by HW to the Duke of Richmond (*post* 13 April).

4. Thomas Sherman (ca 1741-1803), storekeeper of the garrison at Hull in the civil branch of the Ordnance 1783-90, and of the garrison in the Isle of Man 1790-1803 (GM 1803, lxxiii pt i. 284; *London Calendar*, 1784, p. 156; *Royal Kalendar*, 1790, p. 165, 1791, p. 165, 1803, p. 218; Mason to Harcourt 31 Jan., 9 Feb., 21 March 1790: MS letters in the possession of Lord Harcourt).

5. Mason's brother-in-law apparently wished to be named to the post nominally held by his father so that he would con-

tinue to receive the emoluments of the office after his father's death. The son had been performing the duties of the post for about eight years, as Mason explains in the following letter, where he also corrects the figure of £200 to £100. The salary of the office at this time was £50 (raised in 1783 to £60) (*Court and City Register*, 1781, p. 166; *London Calendar*, 1784, p. 156); the additional sum presumably came from perquisites.

6. William Sherman (d. 1786) (GM 1786, lvi pt ii. 716).

7. Mason's wife died in 1767.

8. There is no mention of the bond or any of the Shermans in Mason's last will, dated 29 April 1794.

dies, this £200 will be almost the son's *all*. His acquaintance with Lord Orford<sup>9</sup> arose, from his seeing him at Hull when his regiment was there quartered.—Thus having told my story, I leave it to you whether it may be proper for you to mention it to the Duke of Richmond.<sup>10</sup> I press nothing and only beg to plead my first motive for mentioning the matter to you as what I know your own heart will tell you *is* an excuse. If this friendly application fails, I shall not make (nor indeed have I a method of making) any other. I will say no more than that I am

Yours most truly

W. MASON

PS. The post for which I had prepared this letter to go in its return from Sheffield this evening, brought me yours from Worsop before I had sealed it. I will therefore tell you what great pleasure it gives me to find that you so much approve of our resolutions at the last York meeting. For my own part I think that our original idea of an additional number of county members is only defensible on that argument which now leads the administration to introduce fifteen new peers into the House of Lords.<sup>11</sup> I need enter no more in detail with you than to say that both are meant to throw a weight into the scale of integrity against its opposite of corruption. Take away venal boroughs from one House, and bishops and Scotch peers (their votes at least) from the other, and then there will be no occasion either for more knights or more peers. And so ends my catechism.<sup>12</sup>

—On reviewing my letter as well as my postscript I cannot help reflecting with chagrin what an ill return I make you by a sort of petitionary tale about a storekeeper's place at Hull in answer to your golden historico-dramatico legend (I don't mean lie) of my Lord Earl-Bishop. I was once his Shakespeare or Milton, or both,<sup>13</sup> but now alas Mr or Monsieur or Signore Sherlock (for I am told he is both French, English and Italian in print<sup>14</sup>) wears not only my laurels, but

9. Presumably mentioned in Sherman's letter.

10. As Master of the Ordnance he would be the minister to bestow the desired place.

11. This was not done: see *ante* 1 April 1782 and n. 7.

12. The conclusion of Falstaff's 'honour' speech, *Henry IV*, pt i, V. i.

13. No recorded opinion of Mason by the Earl-Bishop has been found, but in a letter written in 1761 Mason speaks contemptuously of Hervey's professions of friendship (*Gray's Corr.* ii. 718–9).

14. In 1779 Martin Sherlock, chaplain to the Earl-Bishop, published *Lettres d'un voyageur anglais* and *Consiglio ad un giovane poeta*; in 1781, *Letters on Several Subjects*.



has overtopped me in the hotbed of his Lordship's friendship, in which about thirty years ago I was a very sightly plant. For I take for granted the drama you so delightfully describe is the said abbé's, abate's, or parson's production,<sup>15</sup> what a falling off were here did not the alliteration round the period! Pray let me advise you, though you forget who Mr Duncombe was (our county member whom the Association chose instead of that wretch Lascelles),<sup>16</sup> not to forget that when you write to a friend in the country about new books to mention their titles at least, and not to call them *lovely* books, etc., so that one cannot send for them by the carrier. In the case of Cumberland's this perhaps is excusable, but you served me so about S. Jennyns's<sup>17</sup> and a hundred more.

### From MASON, Thursday 11 April 1782

Printed from MS now wsl.

*Address:* The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square. By the penny post.

*Postmark:* W. 9 O'CLOCK. PENNY POST PAID. W. MO.

Aston, April 11th, '82.

Dear Sir,

SINCE I writ yesterday I have seen Mr Sherman who brings this to London, but who at my instance will not trouble you with any personal application. But I write this by him to rectify two mistakes in my last. First that the place in question is only one hundred a year, and the other that he has not done his father's duty more than eight years. The former of these it is of the greater consequence to set right for an obvious reason, but both proceeded from my own mistake. In great haste,

Most truly yours,

W. MASON

15. Mason was wrong. See *post* 13 and 14 April 1782.

16. His defeat is discussed *ante* 20 Sept. 1780.

17. His *Disquisitions* (*ante* 14 March 1782).

TO MASON, Saturday 13 April 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 271-4.

Berkeley Square, April 13, 1782.

FOR forty good years I have made it my rule not to ask a favour of any minister,<sup>1</sup> that he might not think he had a claim on my servility, or call me ungrateful if I did not accept his draft; of Mr Conway when secretary of state before,<sup>2</sup> and now, I have asked no favour, because I have too good claim on his friendship not to distress him if he could not grant it, or not to interfere with what he might owe to others. I did not fear his expecting any dirt from me; I have as full confidence in the virtue of the Duke of Richmond, and though I have no strong title to solicit him, the moment I received your letter I wrote to his Grace<sup>3</sup> and enclosed your brother's letter. As this was yesterday evening, and as I have received no answer, I conclude that he is informing himself of the nature of the office, and has not partiality enough for me, which I approve, to promise me blindly what I ask. I told him that you would not more than I pay the compliment of being obliged to most of his associates; I stated the confidence you had placed in his good intentions, though I avowed that I neither approved of his or your desire of touching the construction of the House of Commons; and in short if he grants the boon it will be owing to your merit, not to my intercession.

Apropos to the Duke, I can now tell you by the post something I only hinted at;<sup>4</sup> in short you political speculatists have sown such doubts in his very delicate and scrupulous mind, that I wish he does not carry them much further than you would desire. He is so struck with the idea of all men having a right to choose their representatives, that he is averse to the bill for excluding contractors, those locusts, from the House of Commons.<sup>5</sup> I knew this long ago, and a

1. HW's formal statement on this subject is quoted *ante* 7 March 1775, n. 1.

2. 1765-8.

3. The letter is missing.

4. *Ante* 26 March and 1 and 2 April 1782. Apparently the change of ministry had removed HW's fears that his letters would be opened.

5. Royal support of this bill, long a

favourite legislative proposal of Rockingham's followers (*Last Journals* ii. 274 and *passim*; *ante* 17 April 1780), had been one of the conditions laid down by Rockingham before he would form a ministry (*ante* 21 March 1782, n. 2). The bill passed the House of Commons 19 April 1782 (*Journals of the House of Commons* xxxviii. 937 and Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii.

melancholy advantage he will give to the enemy if he joins with their iniquitous phalanx. Your friend and Archbishop has convened his black colleagues to consult on opposing that most essential bill.<sup>6</sup> None of the bench but St Asaph and Peterborough<sup>7</sup> were at Lord Rockingham's levee,<sup>8</sup> where I should have concluded they would all have met, but either they are reserved for opposition to all the constitutional, or reforming bills, or have calculated that the life of Cornwallis<sup>9</sup> is worth more than the duration of this ministry, or rather they reserve themselves for Opposition because the odds lie on that side.

I also knew that the Duke of Richmond absented himself from Parliament because his friends did not come into the plans, relative to the alterations of Parliament; indeed after Mr Conway's successful motion,<sup>10</sup> the late ministers were on the point of being beaten; the Lord Advocate turned the debate and saved them by urging that Mr Fox was engaged to support those alterations,<sup>11</sup> which would be so unpalatable to most of the members. I could then only hint these things to you darkly; I mention them to show you, that being on the spot, I saw many inconveniencies arising to the cause from too positive adherence to speculations on which it was impossible to unite the many; and therefore if I have appeared too positive myself, you will excuse me, as I did not act from mere opinions of my own. As *to disunite* is the motto of the enemy, *union* must be ours—or—but I doubt the first is much more practicable than the second.

What do you say to that wicked jackanapes Eden! The bomb he threw, and which, though it fell on his own head,<sup>12</sup> may have perverse

1336), and, after heated debates on 1 and 6 May (*ibid.* xxii. 1356–82), the House of Lords 17 May 1782 (*Journals of the House of Lords* xxxvi. 504 ). The Duke of Richmond supported the bill (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.*, xxii. 1361–4).

6. Only the Bishop of Chester is reported to have spoken against it in the House of Lords (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1372).

7. Jonathan Shipley and John Hinchliffe, who had been in opposition during North's ministry (*Last Journals* i. 534–5).

8. His first levee as prime minister was held 11 April (*London Courant* 12 April).

9. Frederick Cornwallis, Archbishop of Canterbury.

10. Against the continuance of the American war (*ante* 28 Feb. 1782).

11. In Dundas's speech of 8 March 1782 (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1140–3).

12. Eden, secretary to Lord Carlisle, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, on his return to England after the fall of the North ministry, refused to report conditions in Ireland to the new secretary of state, Lord Shelburne, and on 8 April moved in the House of Commons the repeal of that part of the act of 6 Geo. I (cap. 5 sect. 1) which asserted the rights of the King and the English Parliament to make laws binding on Ireland. The motion was withdrawn, after having been denounced by Fox, Conway and others as a deliberate

consequences, is supposed to have been put into his hands by the fiend Loughborough, with whom he was shut up the whole preceding day.

Cumberland's book is called *Anecdotes of Spanish Painters*. To show he has been in Spain (of which he boasts though with little reason)<sup>13</sup> he spells every name (that is not Spanish) as they do; the Fleming Rubens he calls (to Englishmen) *Pedro Pablo* Rubens, and Vitruvius *Viturbio*. Two pages are singularly delectable; one of them was luckily criticized this morning in the *Public Advertiser*,<sup>14</sup> and saves me the trouble of transcribing; the other is a *chef-d'œuvre* of proud puppyism. Speaking of subjection of Spain to the Carthaginians, he says, 'When Carthage was her mistress it is not easy to conceive a situation more degrading for a noble people than to bear the yoke of *mercantile* republicans, and do homage at the shop-boards of upstart demagogues.'<sup>15</sup> Would not one think it was a Vere or a Percy that wrote this impertinent condolence, and not a little *commis*? He goes on—'Surely it is in human nature to prefer the tyranny of the most absolute despot that ever wore a crown to the mercenary and imposing insults of a trader. *Who* would not rather appeal to a court than a counting-house?'—a most worthy ejaculation. This in a free commercial country, and from a petty scribe of office!<sup>16</sup> My grandfather, my mother's father, was a Danish timber-merchant;<sup>17</sup> an honest sensible Whig, and I am very proud of him, as I do believe he would have treated a clerk of Lord Bolinbroke with proper contempt, if he had told him that it was better that all the tradesmen of London should be liable to be sent to the galleys, than that a jack in office should be made to wait in a back-shop. You are mistaken

attempt to embarrass the new ministry (*Last Journals* ii. 438-9; Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1241-64).

13. His mission to Spain had been a failure. See *ante* 14 June 1781.

14. Referring to the painter Castillo, Cumberland says, 'Such being the frail materials of which men of tender feelings . . . are too apt by nature to be compounded, we ought to . . . be cautious how we attempt to derogate from that excusable self-opinion which is so inseparable from talents. . . . In this view of the case, perhaps that species of detraction which a court of law will not denomi-

nate a libel, in a court of conscience and in the eye of Heaven shall amount to murder. I had almost forgot to add that Castillo was a poet' (*Anecdotes of Eminent Painters in Spain*, ii. 67, quoted in *Public Advertiser* 13 April 1782). The correspondent comments, 'Is not this the apology of a man who is himself suspected of being *envious*?'

15. *Ibid.* ii. 215-6.

16. Cumberland was secretary to the Board of Trade.

17. That is, John Shorter was a timber-merchant trading with Denmark and other northern countries.

about Mr Sherlock, who I confess I think has parts,<sup>18</sup> though you and others whose judgments I honour are of a different opinion. I have seen the real author, and had begun a long account of him but laid it aside to answer you on your commission, but I go to Strawberry tomorrow and will finish it if I have time, for it is curious. I shall return on Tuesday, when I shall be very happy if I am able to send you a favourable answer about Mr Sherman.

## TO MASON, Sunday 14 April 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 275-8.

Strawberry Hill, April 14, 1782.

I AM shocked at myself for having made sport, though innocently, at the tragedy of *Lord Russel*, as I have since seen the author, who is a poor worthy Irish clergyman, his name Stratford,<sup>1</sup> aged about five and forty, of great parts, and not a little mad, as Lord Bristol has owned to me. I found Mr Stratford so modest, so humble, and so ignorant of the world, that I talked to him very frankly, and in the gentlest terms I could use, representing to him the total impossibility of his play being acted in its present state. I said I reckoned it immoral to flatter any author, in a manner to draw him into exposing himself, etc. He allowed all my objections, which I stated; thanked me with the warmest gratitude, and then broke out on the *magnanimity* of Mr Cumberland, who had condescended to transcribe his whole play, and begun to alter it. As that magnanimous doctor is so rank a Tory I was still more surprised.

The poor man told me he had brought his family over, at an expense he could ill afford, to get some of his plays acted, for he has also written four comedies.<sup>2</sup> Methinks my Lord of Bristol-Derry had better have given him some preferment than let him write himself

18. HW praises him in his letter to Cole 15 Feb. 1782 (COLE ii. 301-2).

1. Rev. Thomas Stratford (1735-86), B.A. Trinity College, Dublin, 1757 (G. D. Burtchaell and T. U. Sadleir, *Alumni Dublinenses*, Dublin, 1935, p. 789), Rector of Gallstown, co. Westmeath. An account

of his career is given in *Brookiana*, ed. C. H. Wilson, 1804, i. 115-72. His death 'lately in Ireland' is reported in *European Magazine*, 1786, ix. 210\*.

2. Apparently never published or acted. A short specimen of one, entitled *The Self-Important*, is printed in *Brookiana* i. 132-9.

into a jail, as he probably will.<sup>3</sup> I offered to look over one of his comedies; the next morning he brought me the first scene of one, but it is so metaphorical, so ungrammatical, and he has such a brogue that I did not guess at the meaning of one sentence. I was forced to take the book out of his hand and read it myself, when I found a profusion of wit and ideas, similes and metaphors so strangely coupled together in the most heterogeneous bands, that every sentence would require a commentary, and deserves one, though you may judge thence how unfit for the stage. He has no notion of simplicity, character, or nature; nor I believe of comedy itself, for he owned that he had never looked into Congreve or Vanburgh; but the strange part of all is that in the whole scene there is scarce a verb! all consists of metaphors in apposition and allusions in hints. He laughed when I showed him that there was nothing but substantives and adjectives. Besides these works, he has a poem written long ago in blank verse, on the battle of Fontenoy, in nine cantos.<sup>4</sup> In this he has not discarded one of the eight parts of speech; there are sublime passages, but little invention or novelty, at least in the specimen that I have seen; and the images are too fierce. This he is going to publish by subscription for present subsistence, and I shall toil to raise some money for him. He formerly printed a translation of the first book of Milton into Greek, and the University of Dublin supervised it for him.<sup>5</sup> He repeated some of the lines to the Bishop of St Asaph<sup>6</sup> in my room, who admired them, and he quoted Hebrew as glibly; and there the Bishop understood him no more than I did his Greek, which I have quite forgotten. The Duke of Devonshire has got his comedy,

3. Stratford's ambitions in London were thwarted and he suffered financial distress (ibid. i. 131, 165, and 172).

4. *The First Book of Fontenoy, a Poem in Nine Books*, published by 25 Dec. 1782 (*Public Advertiser* 25 Dec.). According to the list of subscribers, HW subscribed for 10 copies. The later books were never published. One of HW's copies is with his 'Poems of George III' (now in the Harvard Library); on the title-page HW has written, 'By the Rev. Mr Stratford, an Irish clergyman. November.' Stratford's design was the vindication of British honour against Voltaire's imputations in his *Poème de Fontenoy* (*Œuvres*, ed. Moland, viii. 371-93).

5. That is, Trinity College. In his prefatory essay to *Fontenoy* Stratford wrote: 'The First Book [of *Paradise Lost*] was accordingly translated and published; but as so mighty a work, if indeed at all practicable, could not without independence be carried into effect, the author having had experience of meanness in a certain Board, whose duty it was to patronize the publication, stopped in his career, from a scorn of soliciting, or accepting favour' (p. 9). The translation was published at Dublin in 1770 (G. C. Williamson, *The Portraits, Prints, and Writings of John Milton*, 1908, p. 136).

6. Jonathan Shipley.

and I am sorely afraid the poor man's madness will be a jest instead of a matter of compassion, but I shall at least endeavour to make them pay for laughing at a man that ought to be respected. He cannot bear the name of Johnson for his paltry acrimony against Milton; in short he is a Whig to the marrow.

Last night before I came out of town, I was at a kind of pastoral opera written by Lady Craven,<sup>7</sup> and acted prettily by her own and other children: you will scold me again for not telling you the title, but in truth I forgot to ask it. There was imagination in it, but not enough to carry off five acts. The Chancellor was there *en titre d'office* not as head of the law, but as *cicisbeo* to the authoress; his countenance is so villainous<sup>8</sup> that he looked more like assassin to the husband. Lady Harcourt said he wanted nothing but a red coat and a black wig to resemble the murderers in *Macbeth*.<sup>9</sup> The late Premier<sup>10</sup> consoles himself with *bon mots*. On Tuesday in the House of Commons he sat opposite to the Treasury bench; somebody said, 'I see, my Lord, you have taken your place'; he replied, 'Yes, a place for life.' It was better what he said on the first *Gazette* of the new administration, 'I was abused for lying *Gazettes*, but there are more lies in this one than in all mine—yesterday his Majesty *was pleased* to appoint the Marquis of Rockingham, the Duke of Richmond, Mr Charles Fox, etc., etc., etc.'<sup>11</sup> It was not a bad answer of Burke to

7. 'On Tuesday last [16 April] a new dramatic piece, in five acts, was performed at Queensberry House, Burlington Gardens, written by Lady Craven, and entitled the "Arcadian Pastoral." The piece was represented by her Ladyship's children, and those of some other persons of fashion, particularly those of Lord Southampton, Lord Spencer, and Lord Paget' (*London Chronicle* 18–20 April 1782, li. 378). A similar announcement, dated 17 April, appeared in a letter in the *Public Advertiser* 18 April, together with the Epilogue to the play. The author of the letter, 'A.B.', says that the play was performed 'last night' (16 April) and that the music in it was composed by 'Mr Beckford of Fonthill.' HW pasted the letter to the *Public Advertiser* on fly-leaves of Henry Bate's *Dramatic Puffers*, 1782 (now WSL). The newspapers have either not recorded the first performance of the play or have erroneously dated it, since HW saw it

Saturday 13 April. It seems never to have been printed.

8. Thurlow was dark and of harsh demeanour. His appearance and manners earned him the nickname of 'the Tiger' (Sir N. W. Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs of His Own Time*, 1836, ii. 196, 199, 200).

9. Another detail in the 18th-century production of *Macbeth* is given by HW in one of his 'Books of Materials': the witches 'are dressed with black hats and blue aprons like basket-women and soldiers' trulls' (*Notes by Horace Walpole on Several Characters of Shakespeare*, ed. W. S. Lewis, Farmington, Conn., 1940, p. 8).

10. Lord North.

11. The same joke appears in a letter from George Selwyn to Lord Carlisle 1 April 1782: 'When I shall now see in the *Gazette*, that his Majesty has been *pleased* to appoint such a one to such a place, I

one of the late gang who sneered at Lord Effingham's kissing hands, 'Yes and he is in the very coat in which he was killed at the riots.'<sup>12</sup>

I reserve the rest of my paper for the Duke of Richmond's answer, which I hope to find favourable—on Tuesday.

Tuesday evening.

I am mortified, for I am come to town and have found neither letter nor message from the Duke! however, I cannot interpret it ill—for surely *No* is easily said. Still I am disappointed, for when one breaks a good resolution, one should like to have been obliged immediately, and enabled to notify the favour directly to the person for whom one solicits; at least, I had set my heart on such a proceeding towards you. I found the note you sent me by Mr Sherman. I had not named the value of the place, so it is not necessary to contradict it, nor will I stoop to lessen the worth of what I asked, for as I had great pleasure in breaking my resolution to oblige you, I will not haggle to obtain half of what I thought I asked. I did not hesitate when I thought it double, but it is plain I am not used to be solicitous, when I do not like the least delay, which I think blasts a favour.

TO MASON, Monday 22 April 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 279–82.

Berkeley Square, April 22, 1782.

**Y**OU will no doubt have guessed the reason why you have not heard from me again on the subject of the commission you gave me. Had I received a favourable answer I should have been happy

substitute in my own mind the word *obliged* in the room of it' (Hist. MSS Comm., 15th Report, App. vi [Carlisle MSS], 1897, p. 621).

12. At the time of the Gordon riots, Wraxall records, the 'natural expectation of effecting a change in ministry was imagined to suspend or supersede in certain minds every other consideration. . . . Public clamour selected the Earl of Effingham as an object of accusation. It was generally asserted, that he had mingled with the rioters on Blackfriars Bridge;

that he had there been mortally wounded, and his body afterwards thrown into the river, by those of his own party; but not till he had been identified and recognized by his dress, particularly by his laced ruffles. Those who were acquainted with that nobleman, and who knew his style of dress, instantly detected the absurdity, as well as falsity of the charge; for, no man was ever less distinguished by any ornaments of apparel' (*Historical Memoirs*, 1836, i. 360–1).



to have told you so instantly. Even a refusal I should not have concealed. The truth is, no answer at all has been vouchsafed; you know me too well I believe, to be surprised at my not applying again: and I flatter myself that you would have been displeased if I had. Nay do not laugh at me for having imagined at my age that there was one man in whom I could place full confidence, who I could suppose would be the same in power as when out; still I will be just. Perhaps vanity made me mistake civilities for friendship. Perhaps I presumed too much; and though I protest I thought I was not only obliging you but serving the person I solicited by putting it into his power to oblige *you*, it is very possible that I had no right to ask even so small a favour, and so well founded. I stand corrected, I shall never be so arrogant again. Nay unless I see that person changed in *essentials*, I will not, because he has had no attention for me, conclude that his virtue is shaken by such tinsel trappings as he has attained, and which being so common to the most worthless of his rank, can surely not be flattering to the individual. At least I, who have more pride than most men, should never be proud of what are the appendages to birth and rank, and imply no merit in one's self.

For the trial I have made, be assured I do not repent it, whatever opens one's eyes is useful. It is good to have one's vanity reprimanded, nor can I be sorry to have shown you how zealous I was to oblige *you*, though by the manner in which I feel the rebuff, you may judge how little I am accustomed to ask favours, so little, that this slight will account to you for my not being able to tell you anything more than you may see in the newspapers. I should not have *haunted* the new ministers—*now* I would as soon step into a cave of scorpions, or connect with the late ministers. My principles will not alter, whether I am neglected or whether they who professed the same abandon them, nor, unless they do, will I think they do. They have a difficult part to act, and nothing yet promises them any success, so deeply had the last wretches plunged us. The Dutch are haughty, obstinate, or too much in the power of France.<sup>1</sup> Ireland adheres to its point.<sup>2</sup> The combined squadrons of the three hostile nations will

1. 'Overtures were made by the new ministers to the Dutch for a separate peace, but were rejected by them' (*Last Journals* ii. 441).

2. That is, insistence on the right to trade and to independence of the English

Parliament. Henry Grattan (*post* 4 June 1782), popular hero of the Irish declaration of rights, had already delivered his great speech of 16 April 1782, but news of it had not yet reached England. The newspapers, however, accurately reported the

amount to fourscore sail in the Channel; ours but to twenty-seven.<sup>3</sup> I do not think that twenty-seven ought to beat eighty, because I concluded I had a claim on one who had long professed great regard for me; nor do I hold the new ministers accountable for the impotence of a nation that had been made eunuch by their predecessors. If I knew where to find Mr Sherman, I would have sent and begged him not to lose his time in town, or if he can find better interest than my own I should be happy to have him succeed. If I were not afraid of mistaking my own wounded pride for his hardship, I should say he was ill treated; but the first is so natural that I must be on my guard against myself: nor will I be unjust because I have duped myself which I do believe I did in construing great civilities into *tacit* professions, and in thinking the person in question loved me because I was an enthusiast to his virtues.<sup>4</sup> Do not therefore let my blunder prevent Mr Sherman from seeking better interest.

Mr Stonhewer has lent me (am I not to have one myself of)<sup>5</sup> your 'Essay on Church Music.' I was diverted by the only passage I understand, the *quavers on the generation of the patriarchs*.<sup>6</sup> Sir John Hawkins must have more sense or sensibility than I have if he is hurt by a single word. I thank you for its not being more striking. He came in an hour ago just as I was finishing it and I had a mind to show it to him, but I did not. You will not dislike the *sayings* of the time in lieu of the politics; the new administration is called the

ebullience of the Irish people at this time (*London Chronicle* 20-3 April 1782, li. 392; *Last Journals* ii. 435; W. E. H. Lecky, *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, 1892, ii. 299-302).

3. HW's figures roughly approximate those in a 'list of the present naval force of the belligerent powers' published in the *London Chronicle* 20-3 April 1782, li. 388-9, where the British home fleet is put at 29 ships, the allied fleets of the enemy at 74.

4. Only two years earlier HW had borne witness to the Duke of Richmond's virtues in his dedication of vol. iv of the *Anecdotes of Painting*; Richmond's political welfare had been second only to Conway's in HW's concern. The Duke's apparent inattention is explained *post* 27 April 1782.

5. It does not appear in the SH records.

6. HW apparently alludes to a passage

omitted from later editions: 'Those few fragments of Scripture which were selected from the New Testament and admitted into the liturgy under the title of Epistle and Gospel, were all sung, not merely in simple intonation or chant, but in this mode of figurate descant, in which the various voices, following one another according to the rules of an elaborate canon, were perpetually repeating different words at the same time. One example of this kind may suffice, and a more ridiculous one can hardly be conceived. The genealogy in the first chapter of St Matthew's Gospel was thus set to music: while the bass was holding forth the existence of Abraham, the tenor, in defiance of nature and chronology, was begetting Isaac; the counter-tenor begetting Jacob; and the treble begetting Joseph and all his brethren' (quoted in Davies, *York Press* 292).

*regency*, as they govern in the place of the King. Lord Effingham from his strange figure and dress and his two staffs, as Deputy Earl Marshal and Treasurer of the Household, is called *the devil on two sticks*.<sup>7</sup> I look on these sarcasms as buds of a new opposition. Adieu!

PS. I forgot to tell you that lately Dr Percy, the new Bishop of Dromore,<sup>8</sup> told me or rather proved to me a curious anecdote; you know Professor Ferguson<sup>9</sup> denied positively in print that a Highland lad of his house, and in presence of Dr Blair,<sup>10</sup> recited some of the pretended poems of Ossian in Erse,<sup>11</sup> which I think Dr Blair has also denied.<sup>12</sup> Dr Percy has lately found I believe on coming to town two letters<sup>13</sup> from Blair, which he had forgotten, about Lord Algonon Percy's<sup>14</sup> board in Ferguson's house;<sup>15</sup> and in both he mentions the fact of the lad's recitation in Ferguson's house and presence. I saw these letters myself and so did Lord Ossory, the Bishop of St Asaph, and one or two other persons who were with me.<sup>16</sup> 'Well,' said I, 'Mr Dean,'<sup>17</sup> and will you not print these letters to take off the

7. Two caricatures of him are described in BM, *Satiric Prints* v. 587, 626. The allusion is to Foote's farce, *The Devil upon Two Sticks* (1768).

8. Letters patent for Percy's promotion to the see of Dromore were issued 20 April 1782 (GM 1782, lii. 207).

9. Adam Ferguson (1723-1816), M.A., St Andrews, 1742; LL.D., Edinburgh, 1766; professor of natural philosophy, Edinburgh, 1759-64; of mental and moral philosophy, 1764-85.

10. Hugh Blair (1718-1800), divine and literary critic; M.A., Edinburgh, 1739; D.D., St Andrews, 1757; professor of rhetoric and *belles lettres*, Edinburgh, 1760-83; chief supporter of the authenticity of Macpherson's Ossianic poems.

11. The incident, which allegedly took place 13 Oct. 1765 (Nichols, *Lit. Illus.* vi. 569), was mentioned by Percy in the second edition (1767) of his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, but the reference was suppressed in the third edition (1775). In 1781 William Shaw published his *Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems Ascribed to Ossian*, in which he repeated the story of the recital at Ferguson's house, whereupon Ferguson published in the newspapers an advertisement, dated 21 July 1781, in which he denied that he was

ever 'present at the repetition of verses to Dr Percy by a young student of the Highlands' (Nichols, *Lit. Illus.* vi. 568; GM 1781, li. 567-8).

12. No such denial has been found, but HW may have assumed it from Percy's statement that he 'never believed Dr Blair to have been conscious of any deception in what passed between the student and me' (GM 1781, li. 568).

13. Of 10 Feb. 1766 and 10 Jan. 1767, apparently never printed (R. M. Schmitz, *Hugh Blair*, New York, 1948, p. 89).

14. Lord Algonon Percy (1750-1830), Lord Lovaine and Baron of Alnwick, 1786; cr. (1790) E. of Beverley.

15. HW is mistaken; Lord Algonon boarded with Dr Blair at Edinburgh 1765-7 (Schmitz, op. cit. 64-5). Thomas Percy, chaplain to the Duke of Northumberland, accompanied Lord Algonon to Edinburgh in 1765 to arrange for his stay there. Blair's correspondence about him was carried on with Percy (ibid. 88-9).

16. Boswell records Percy's violence upon the subject when Percy showed him the minutes he had kept at Ferguson's house (*Boswell Papers* xv. 172).

17. Percy had been Dean of Carlisle from 1778 to his elevation to the episcopacy.

accusation of falsehood from yourself?' He seemed afraid to do so.<sup>18</sup> This timidity sets those Scotch impostors and their cabal in a still worse light than their forgeries, as it shows their persecution of all who oppose them.

### From MASON, Wednesday 24 April 1782

Printed from MS now WSL.

*Address:* The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

*Postmark:* WORKSOP 26 AP.

Aston, April 24th, 1782.

I AM as much obliged to you as if your application had met with immediate success, but I will not yet think that it has failed, and am only sorry that the delay gives you so much anxiety and fills your imagination with such uncomfortable surmises. For my own part when I consider that the favour which you asked on my part required no immediate answer, and that if done perhaps a year hence may be done in good time, as it was not to fill a vacancy but only on a resignation to receive another officer, I can easily impute it to the Duke's more pressing concerns. I have however written to Mr Sherman to use other interest which I know he has, and by so doing he will perhaps put your better interest more speedily in effect.

I shall tomorrow write you a longer letter by a private hand which will show you that I on my part am always ready to obey your requests even though in so doing I incur danger of falling into a poetical diarrhoea, therefore till tomorrow,

Addio.

### From MASON, Thursday 25 April 1782

Printed from MS now WSL. The first three sentences, omitted by Mitford, are printed here for the first time.

*Address:* The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square.

<sup>18</sup> Percy seems never to have published Blair's letters, but the alleged recital by the Highland youth at Ferguson's tea-

party in 1765 loomed large in a violent war of pamphlets at this time (Schmitz, *op. cit.* 88-9).

Aston, April 25, 1782.

TO explain myself concerning my diarrhoea.—You know that lately you wished that somebody was *beshet*;<sup>1</sup> but this was not to be done without *shetting*, and this I have done very plentifully. The *mollock hepe* goes to town with this and will be *sent from opper oryall* very speedily.<sup>2</sup> You cannot have a present, because no persons are to have that favour but such persons as the author is *not* acquainted with. You must therefore watch the papers for a pamphlet with this title, 'The Dean and the 'Squire, a Political Eclogue, by the Author of the H[eroic] Epistle, etc.'<sup>3</sup> But who say you is the Dean? not Dean Milles, nor yet Dean Dampier?<sup>4</sup> No. Who but Dean Tucker!<sup>5</sup> whose head I can tell you jowls very musically against Squire Jennyns.—You have here the whole of my secret and I trust will keep it so far as the secret should be kept. Lord Harcourt and a few such may be entrusted.<sup>6</sup>

I own I have as little hopes of the present ministry's duration as you can have. That wrong-headed fellow Burke will spoil all with his nerves and his farcical grimace. There is not a farmer in my parish but when he reads his speech about the message to the House<sup>7</sup> but will

1. It was Soame Jenyns (*ante* 26 March 1782).

2. That is, Mason's new satire will soon be published. The joke, started by HW, derives from stanza viii of the *Archæological Epistle*:

'So have I seen, in Edinborrowe-towne,

A ladie faire in wympled paramente  
Abbrodden goe, whanne on her powrethe  
downe

A mollock hepe, from opper oryal sente;  
Who, whanne shee lookethe on her un-  
swote geare,

Han liefer ben beshet thanne in thilke  
steynct aumere.'

Mason's glosses include: 'mollock hepe,' a moist or wet heap or load; 'opper oryal,' upper chamber-window; 'beshet,' shut up or confined at home; 'steynct aumere,' stained robe or mantle.

3. Publication of *The Dean and the 'Squire* 'by the author of the *Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers*' was announced in the *London Chronicle* 7-9 May 1782, li. 447.

4. Thomas Dampier (1748-1812), D.D., Cambridge, 1780; Dean of Rochester, 1782;

Bp of Rochester, 1802, of Ely, 1808. Politically he sided with the Court and had been rewarded with the deanship a few weeks before the date of this letter (*London Gazette* 30 March 1782).

5. Who had incurred Mason's dislike by his *Treatise concerning Civil Government* (*ante* 21 April 1781).

6. On 15 May 1782 Mason wrote to Harcourt: 'As I find Malcolm Macgreggor has again appeared in the world, you surely might tell me, who you know think well of that odd writer, whether he keeps up his usual fun' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 74).

7. On 15 April Fox read to the House of Commons a message from the King recommending 'to his faithful Commons the consideration of an effectual plan of economy through all the branches of the public expenditure; towards which important object his Majesty has taken into his actual consideration, a reform and regulation in his civil establishment, which he will shortly cause to be laid before this House' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1269). 'Burke in that House, and Lord Shelburne in the other, were ridiculously

laugh him to scorn for his absurdity. I have written so much these last four days, in which all that I have now done was began and completed, that my fingers feel tired.

Yours very faithfully,

W. MASON

It rains here incessantly and the floods are excessive. If it does so with you I hope it will drown all your caterpillars.<sup>8</sup> We want it not for that purpose.

TO MASON, Saturday 27 April 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 284-5.

Berkeley Square, April 27, 1782.

YOU was in the right in your patience and I extremely in the wrong in losing mine, yet to you alone am I excusable, for I was so eager to serve you in so slight and yet so reasonable a request,<sup>1</sup> that I could not bear to wait even a few days for it. I met the Duke last night at Lady Ailesbury's;<sup>2</sup> he came up to me with earnestness, begged my pardon for not having answered my letter, but had called twice at my house when I was out of town, which I had not heard. He told me the suit should be granted, but he had stayed to inquire whether Mr Sherman had executed the business well for his father. Well, I am overjoyed on your account, but what do you think is the consequence?—that I never will ask any favour again. I see I am too proud; I felt the appearance of neglect too fiercely, and never, never

extravagant in panegyrics on his Majesty for this magnanimity which certainly was no measure of his, but an artifice of their own, and but a shallow one, to persuade the people that they meant to adhere to their former principles; while their flattery was rather a symptom that they would not' (*Last Journals* ii. 440-1). Burke's 'short and elegant speech' is summarized in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1269-71.

8. See *ante* 1 April 1782. The plague of caterpillars had been blamed on 'the

peculiar warmth of the season, want of violent wind, heavy and long continued rains or severe cold, and of their other peculiar enemies to check and destroy them' (GM 1782, lii. 174).

1. Concerning the storekeeper's post for Thomas Sherman.

2. It is perhaps not too conjectural to assume that this meeting was arranged by Lady Ailesbury, the Duke of Richmond's mother-in-law, to whom HW had doubtless conveyed his sense of injury.

will I do my few friends the injury of suspecting them wrongfully. My nature is too hasty for the commerce of the world, and is not corrected by such long acquaintance with it. I knew myself so far that for many years I have dealt little with mankind, and what is the event? why here am I with all the warmth of a boy! oh I am ashamed of myself! I will go to Strawberry tomorrow for three days and humble myself to the dust.

I have not received what you may trust I long for, but I suppose a private *hand* does not travel so fast as the post. The *Archæologic Epistle* has not a gainsayer. Governor Pownall told me as a *secret* discovery he had made that it is certainly by the author of the *Heroic Epistle*.<sup>3</sup> I have just received a letter<sup>4</sup> from Scotland in which the writer, Lord Buchan, cites the former with high complacency. I have inundated you lately with so many quires that I shall not add a word to this.

## TO MASON, Tuesday 7 May 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 285-8.

May 7, 1782.

**I**F I did not know that you can do just what you will and can write in any and all styles, I should not have expected that you could couch the subtleties of metaphysics in short verse.<sup>1</sup> Nay you have done so too well, for I doubt whether the general run of readers and bishops will understand your double-edged irony, it is so closely reasoned. I must have the second part too, for it is incomplete,<sup>2</sup> nor

3. The reviewer for the *Monthly Review* (Samuel Badcock, according to B. C. Nangle's *Index of Contributors*, 1934, p. 54) was from 'the spirit and style . . . inclined to attribute' the poem 'to the author of the *Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers*' (April 1782, lxvi. 298).

4. Missing.

1. *The Dean and the 'Squire* is in octosyllabic couplets.

2. In the preface, a satirical dedication to Jenyns, Mason says the poem is 'but a fragment' (p. ii), and he breaks off abruptly at line 265:

'But not from what you've proved, but I—

\* \* \* \* \*

Hold Muse nor give the 'Squire's reply.  
You've run two heats; to start a third  
Would now, I think, be quite absurd,' etc.  
(p. 14).

No continuation was ever published, but when Jenyns in 1784 published *Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform*, Mason resumed his attack in 'The Duchess and Squire, a Political Eclogue on the Subject of a Reform in Parliament.' This satire of some 250 lines is also unpublished, but survives

have you lashed the most offensive parts of the Squire's book, especially the pages 145 and 147.<sup>3</sup> The preface and notes<sup>4</sup> are excellent too, and I thank you particularly for Butler's niche.<sup>5</sup> The certificate<sup>6</sup> will puzzle and perplex. One Bains I hear, is now thought the author of the *Archæologic Epistle*.<sup>7</sup> I am persuaded that there will be a controversy, and that some will maintain that the one is by the *Heroic Epistle* writer, and others that the *Squire and Dean* is, while many will go on believing that the latter Dean is Milles, though they do not know how. I wish Fresnoy was ready to increase the perplexity.

The papers will tell you that confusion is already set on foot in the House of Lords.<sup>8</sup> There is one<sup>9</sup> too who urges on economy in order to drive the new ministers to make more enemies, and so deprive them of the means of making friends. I do not believe he will find much difficulty in getting rid of most of them. That perhaps would be fortunate should it happen soon, while they are in the

in a transcript by Mitford, Add. MSS 32563 fols 83-94.

3. On p. 145 of his *Disquisitions on Several Subjects*, 1782, Jenyns remarks that 'this love of liberty does not arise so much from our fears of being ill-governed, as from our dislike of being governed at all'; on p. 147, that 'princes are made tyrants by the perverseness and disobedience of their subjects, and subjects become slaves from their incapacity to enjoy liberty.'

4. Several quotations from Tucker and Jenyns, and from Locke, were supplied by Mason to point up his satire.

5. One of Mason's notes reads: 'Before the Dean [Tucker] published his elaborate treatise [*A Treatise concerning Civil Government*], he printed it first only for the perusal of certain friends, who were either Tories from principle or discretion. . . . The mitred author of the letter to the Cocoa-Tree (written at the commencement of Lord Bute's administration) . . . was amongst these personages; and it is not to be doubted, but it would receive many improvements from his adroit and masterly hand' (p. 3). Butler's *Address to the Cocoa-Tree*, 1762, written before his defection from the Whigs, includes a sentence that Mason used as a motto for his poem: 'Remember that the principles for which the Whigs struggle, are the foundation of our present government, which

they apprehend to be undermined whenever Tory maxims are openly avowed.' Cf. *A Collection of Scarce and Interesting Tracts, Written by Persons of Eminence*, 1787-8, i. 19-20.

6. Immediately after the conclusion of the poem appears a 'certificate,' signed 'Malcolm Macgreggor': 'Whereas a late ingenious and anonymous production, entitled *An Archæological Epistle*, has been attributed to my pen, I think proper to declare, that, however I may approve the political sentiments therein contained, I am above wearing any man's laurels; and that I conceive those, who do not discriminate between my style and that author's, have as little critical acumen, as he seems to allow to his reverend correspondent.'

7. This attribution to John Baynes (1758-87), lawyer and miscellaneous writer, found its way into Nichols (*Lit. Anec.* viii. 113) and thence into Leslie Stephen's article on Mason in DNB. His connection with the poem is explained *post* 18 May 1782.

8. Heated bickering attended the debate in the House of Lords 6 May 1782 on the bill for the exclusion of contractors from the House of Commons (*London Courant* 8 May 1782; *ante* 13 April 1782; Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxii. 1377-82).

9. The King.



bloom of their popularity, and before they have lost none of it and *before they quarrel amongst themselves*, but the last is most likely to arrive first. My own opinion is that there will be great confusion before any permanent settlement. The present system was not intended nor is constituted to last, nor have I a higher idea of the abilities of those who I believe are meant to succeed.<sup>10</sup> The old party will recover their spirits every day, with pretty near one principle of action, while the new will split into petty divisions, and run races of popularity with each other. Perhaps after some struggles and some more revolutions, the whole will subside into the two ancient divisions under the colours of prerogative and liberty: but these may be only my conjectures or visions, and therefore I will tire you with no more of them. A master genius may give a different turn to the whole, but as yet there are so many chiefs, and so few fit to be so, that any system will be lame and hobbling for some time. In truth I discern but one capable of being the leader.<sup>11</sup> I will not name him, lest you and I should not agree. Adieu.

PS. Lady Laura and Lord Chewton were married two days ago.<sup>12</sup> You talk of bad weather in your last, it has lasted here to this instant: there is not a leaf big enough to cover a caterpillar's pudenda.<sup>13</sup> But we do not seem likely to want any shade. I suppose they who affect to like it, which they will if it is not to be had, will build conservatories to bring their trees forward, to which there will be a double temptation, as coals are risen to enormous price,<sup>14</sup> and though ministers must court popularity by economy, economy is not a jot more in fashion even amongst the people. Not a beggar's civil list but is two or three quarters in arrear: and give the King his due, I question whether he is half so much in debt in proportion as the lowest of his tradesmen.

10. Lord Shelburne and his faction (*Last Journals* ii. 443).

11. 'I have no hesitation in saying that I think Mr Fox the fittest man in England for prime minister' (HW to Lady Ossory 7 July 1782).

12. 'Yesterday [5 May] . . . was married at Gloucester House, the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Chewton, to Lady Laura Waldegrave. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Dr Duval. Their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Duke of Dorset, Earl

and Countess of Harcourt, with the family, were present' (*London Chronicle* 4-7 May 1782, li. 434).

13. Printed from Mitford's notebook, Add. MSS 32563 fol. 53.

14. 'It appears rather extraordinary, and it is a hard matter to assign a reason for the sudden advance of the price of coals. Within these three or four days that essential article has been raised in price from 15*d.* to 3*s.* 9*d.* per bushel' (*London Courant* 4 May 1782).

## From MASON, Wednesday 8 May 1782

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: 10 MA.

Aston, May 8th, 1782.

I HAVE thought proper not to break in upon your *petite carême* or penitentiary three days at Strawberry, with my repetition of thanks which I sincerely offer you for the pains and interest you have taken in the affair I petitioned you upon. You say that you will never ask a ministerial favour again and you say well. I on my part hope I shall say well, for I am sure I shall say it truly, that I will never solicit you to do so except for the deanery of Gloucester for myself, when the present Dean shall be made a bishop. This is my only exception and I hope you will admit it to be a reasonable one.

You have by this time, I suppose, received what I sent by a private hand. I would wish you to read 'spirituel' for 'spiritual' in page iii<sup>1</sup> and to insert this parenthesis between line 210 and 211:

(Unless, by Justice to be mumbled,  
He's forced to stay like Nabob Rumbold.)<sup>2</sup>

This will appear in the second edition, with an apology<sup>3</sup> for the broadness of some of the jests in imitation of the author of *The Walloons*.<sup>4</sup>

I hope you will tell me all that you hear (worth hearing) on this occasion and that you will believe me to be your much obliged and grateful servant.

1. 'If I have made him [Tucker in *The Dean and the Squire*] a little too lively and spiritual, I . . . humbly ask his [pardon]. I know nothing does so much harm to an ecclesiastic, in the road of preferment, as the bare suspicion of being witty'—i.e., *spirituel*.

2. Rumbold's financial transactions in India were at this time the subject of a Parliamentary inquiry.

3. These changes and insertions were not made.

4. Cumberland's comedy, first acted at Covent Garden 20 April 1782; not printed until 1813, when it appeared in *The*

*Posthumous Dramatic Works of Richard Cumberland*. The reviewer for the *London Courant* 22 April 1782 remarked that many parts of the play were 'too low for farce itself, while the dialogue in general . . . is made up of coarse expressions and *double entendres*.' Cumberland's apology was printed in the *Public Advertiser* 23 April: 'The author of *The Walloons*, gratefully submitting to the correction of the public, has withdrawn the passages, which from the broadness of the jest, justly became obnoxious on the first night's representation,' etc.

## From MASON, Saturday 18 May 1782

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WORKSOP 24 MA.

Aston, May 18th, 1782.

THE *one* Baines whom you mentioned in your last but one is an ingenious young Yorkshire man, a student<sup>1</sup> in Gray's Inn,<sup>2</sup> who could not well conceal himself on a prior occasion,<sup>3</sup> because it was absolutely necessary he should revise the press, but in the latter<sup>4</sup> he disguised himself *en militaire* and managed the matter excellently. I have heard from him lately, and he wants much to know whether that ballad of the Duke of Wharton's<sup>5</sup> which you have quoted in your *Noble Authors*, vol. 2, p. 131<sup>6</sup>—

The Duke he drew out half his sword,  
The Guard drew out the rest—

be in print or in MS, if in print where he can find it.<sup>7</sup> I should be much obliged to you, if you will give him a single line of intelligence on this matter. His address is to John Baines, Esq., Coney Court No. 11, Gray's Inn (by the penny post). I know not why he wants it, but I wish to oblige him as he has been very useful to me, and may be more so.

I sent up by the last post to my friend Mr H. Duncombe a grave *Ode to Mr W. Pitt*,<sup>8</sup> a kind of companion to my last *To the Naval Officers of Great Britain*,<sup>9</sup> which, if he thinks it will be well timed, is to be printed by Dodsley immediately. This will serve to puzzle per-

1. Mason first wrote 'barrister.'

2. He had been admitted in 1777, the same year that he received his B.A. from Cambridge (Joseph Foster, 'Register of Admissions to Gray's Inn: 1521-1881,' *Col-lectanea genealogica*, [1881]-1885, p. 51; Nichols, *Lit. Anec.* viii. 113-4).

3. Apparently when seeing the *Arch-æological Epistle* through the press.

4. The transmission of *The Dean and the 'Squire* to the printer.

5. Philip Wharton (1698-1731), 2d M. of Wharton, cr. (1718) D. of Wharton; rake and Jacobite.

6. Mason refers to the second edition,

1759, where HW says that the Duke made the ballad 'on being seized by the guard in St James's Park, for singing the Jacobite air, *The King Shall Have His Own Again*.'

7. HW was unable to remember the source of the ballad, and it has not been found (post 25 May 1782; HW to Baynes 24 May 1782; GM 1791, lxi pt i. 536).

8. *Ode to the Honourable William Pitt* (post 4 June 1782, n. 1; Gaskell 29).

9. Mason's *Ode to the Naval Officers of Great Britain*, *Written Immediately after the Trial of Admiral Keppel, February the Eleventh, 1779*, was published 31 March 1779 (Mason's *Satirical Poems* [132]).

haps better than Fresnoy was he ready to make his appearance, which he will not be able to do till next winter for our York Press works sure but slowly.

—But I remember you asked me before<sup>10</sup> who is Mr Duncombe? Mr Duncombe, Sir, is our county member, made such by our Yorkshire Association when we turned out that wretch Lascelles. Do not, however, be afraid that this *Ode* turns much on our principles;<sup>11</sup> a little indeed it does, but there is a fling in it at the protesters, Bathurst, Archbishop of York, Chandos,<sup>12</sup> Pagett,<sup>13</sup> against the bill for providing for Lord Chatham[’s] son,<sup>14</sup> which I think will lead you to excuse the other.

Pray make my most cordial congratulations to Lady Chewton, and deliver her this message verbatim: ‘That if I was not too old and too snuffy, I should certainly attempt writing her epithalamium.’

If your caterpillars are not drowned ere this they certainly are of the otter genus, for it is here never fair weather for a quarter of an hour.

You mentioned in a former letter that you thought I had treated your friend Sir John Hawkins mighty civilly. No matter for that; I dare say if he ever reads my cathedral essay, he will answer it.<sup>15</sup> He is much more to be dreaded as a controversialist, than any two deans<sup>16</sup> and a Squire and a Dr Johnson and a whole bench of bishops into the bargain.

Yours most truly,

W. MASON

10. *Ante* 2 April 1782. Mason had already identified him to HW (*ante* 10 April 1782).

11. I.e., the Yorkshire Association’s. For the most part the ode is a rhapsodic invitation to Pitt to show that he has inherited his father’s political sentiments and patriotic zeal.

12. James Brydges (1731–89), 3d D. of Chandos, 1771.

13. Henry Bayly (later Paget) (1744–1812), 10th Bn Paget, 1769, cr. (1784) E. of Uxbridge.

14. A bill settling an annuity of £4000 on the earldom of Chatham, passed by both Houses in May and June 1778, had

been opposed by the four peers named by Mason (*Annual Register*, 1778, xx. \*209–\*210; *Last Journals* ii. 176 and 184). See *ante* i. 394 n. 4. In the third stanza of his ode, remarking on Pitt’s universal popularity, Mason wrote:

‘While they alone with envy sigh,  
Whose rancour to thy parent dead  
Aimed, ere his funeral rites were paid,  
With vain vindictive rage to starve his  
progeny.’

15. There is no evidence that Hawkins answered it.

16. Milles, satirized in the *Archæological Epistle*, and Tucker, in *The Dean and the Squire*.

I hope you have made my most respectful acknowledgments to the Duke of Richmond, which are equally due to him from me, whether Mr Sherman be found eligible or not.

PS. May 22d. This was to have gone by the last post on Sunday, but was forgot to be sent. Since then I have had a letter from Mr Sherman who has told me that by your being so obliging as to forward his father's petition by General Conway to the Duke, the affair was settled in his favour. He is very grateful, and I am, as I ought be, as much so to you, the General and the Duke.—But he tells me also that when he called at your door you could not see him, being ill of a fever. I hope in God this was even less than a fevrette, a fever I hope of David's<sup>17</sup> coinage, as an honest porter has a right to do on occasion. However, I wish to hear soon that you are really well, even without a recovery.

### To MASON, Saturday 25 May 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 291–3.

Berkeley Square, May 25, 1782.

MY illness was indeed not an excuse left with the porter to avoid visits but a very serious one, the consequences of which are not yet gone. I caught a violent cold, which fell on my breast and obliged me to be bloodied two days together. In course the bleedings brought the gout and here I am on my couch with both left hand and foot in flannel. I was at the worst when I wished to see Mr Sherman, but I am content that he and you are so. My cold is an epidemic one;<sup>1</sup> the Duchess and all my nieces are laid up by it. Lady Chewton has been presented,<sup>2</sup> but looked sadly, having been bloodied the day before.

As I have the use of but one hand and am reduced very low, I can merely answer your paragraph. I did write a few lines last night

17. David Monnerat, HW's Swiss footman.

1. There is an account of 'The Epidemic Catarrh of 1782' in *Annals of Influenza . . . in Great Britain from 1510 to 1837*, ed. Theophilus Thompson, 1853, pp. 117–99. The contemporary newspapers

contain many references to the epidemic both in London and in other parts of the country.

2. 'Yesterday Lord and Lady Chewton were presented to their Majesties; her Ladyship was elegantly dressed in white and silver' (*London Courant* 24 May 1782).

to Mr Baines that *you* might lose no merit with him, but I could give him no satisfaction. I have utterly forgot every circumstance relative to that ballad. Probably as I lived in that century, I retained the lines by memory, but whether I did or not I cannot tell now.

I have looked but do not see your new ode<sup>3</sup> advertised. I do not care what it is about, I dare to say I shall like it. My present object is to be amused, which few but you can compass. For politics, I am satisfied that the royalists are routed, and at least they must fight their way back before they can do more positive mischief. I cannot look forwards to what I may not see. I have loved old Lady England very disinterestedly till I am sixty-five. She has now got younger and abler gallants, and [I] must beg she will dispense with my troubling my head any more with her affairs. It is prudent for old folks to take the opportunity of any new era for breaking off instead of tapping every new generation one after another.

They say there is another packet of good news<sup>4</sup> come this morning and that Sir Samuel Hood<sup>5</sup> has taken two or three more men-of-war.<sup>6</sup> It is surely very pleasant that now one can dare to be glad of success! Three months ago a victory made one expect to be sent to the Bastile,<sup>7</sup> still it is fortunate that Rodney and Hood cannot march their fleet to the door of the House of Commons<sup>8</sup>—if they could!—

After dinner.

The codicil to our victory is true. Hood has taken an eighty and seventy-four, two frigates and a store-ship, all chock-full of cannon,

3. It was published 28 May. See *post* 4 June 1782, n. 1.

4. The first packet had brought word of Rodney's victory over the French fleet off Dominica in the West Indies 12 April 1782 (*London Gazette* 18 May 1782).

5. Sir Samuel Hood (1724–1816), cr. (1778) Bt; cr. (1782) Bn Hood of Catherington (Irish peerage); cr. (1796) Vct Hood of Whitley; Rear-Adm., 1780; Vice-Adm., 1787; Adm., 1794; second in command under Rodney at Dominica.

6. Hood 'with a detachment of ten ships, in pursuit of the French fleet, after the engagement of the 12th of April, had come up with, and taken in the *Mona Passage*, the *St Esprit* of 80 guns, and the *Pluto* of 74, together with two 44-gun frigates that had them in tow' (*London Chronicle* 23–5 May 1782, li. 504). The

names of the ships are inaccurately reported in this account of Hood's victory, but the story was substantially correct (Hood to Rodney 22 April 1782, *Letters Written by Sir Samuel Hood*, ed. David Hannay, Navy Records Society, 1895, pp. 133–4).

7. That is, military victories encouraged the absolutist tendencies of George III.

8. Rodney's recall had been ordered by the new ministry, before the news of his victory (for which he was voted the thanks of the House, 22 May 1782) arrived. The recall, which Rodney's popularity made a source of embarrassment to the administration, was debated in the House of Commons 30 May–7 June 1782 (David Hannay, *Rodney*, 1891, pp. 165–6 and 215–6; Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 77–91).

masts, etc., destined to equip their fleet for the conquest of Jamaica. Rodney is made an English and Hood an Irish peer,<sup>9</sup> Drake a baronet<sup>10</sup> and Jervas a Knight of the Bath,<sup>11</sup> but all I doubt will not compensate the unlucky recall! for you may be sure if the individuals would be soothed, the faction will not.

From MASON, Sunday 2 June 1782

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: 4 JU.

Aston, June 2d, 1782.

I AM sorry your illness was real, but hope your next will tell me that the gout which followed it has entirely left you.

I received a letter the last post from Lord Harcourt who speaks of certain obligations he has lately received from you in a very enigmatical yet very grateful manner, and as I can guess at gratitude better than I can at a riddle and believe it in this case to be sincere I find myself inclined to tell you so. Had he been a bishop instead of an earl, I should have had a reason *a fortiori* for so doing, but as it is, it is surely not so common a thing as not to deserve noticing.

That curmudgeon Dodsley has I find printed my *Ode* in a gigantic type to swell it out to the price of a shilling, though I ordered it to be printed exactly like my former *To the Naval Officers*. It makes it look a mere catchpenny. If ever I print any such little matters again<sup>1</sup> I am resolved to do them at my own expense and give them to a

9. Rodney was created a baron 19 June 1782 (GEC). Hood was created Baron Hood of Catherington 12 Sept. 1782 (GEC), but the King's intention of conferring the dignity was known much earlier (*London Gazette* 28 May 1782).

10. Francis Samuel Drake (1729–89). Rear-Adm., 1780, Vice-Adm., 1787, lord of the Admiralty, 1789, was created a baronet 28 May 1782 for his services as commander of the van of Rodney's fleet in the battle of 12 April (GEC, *Complete Baronetage* v. 220; *London Gazette* 28 May 1782).

11. John Jervis (1735–1823), cr. (1797)

E. of St Vincent and (1801) Vct St Vincent; Rear-Adm., 1787, Vice-Adm., 1793, Adm., 1795. He was made Knight of the Bath 29 May 1782 for his capture in the Channel on 19 April 1782 of the French ship *Pégase*. The installation ceremony is described in the *London Chronicle* 28–30 May 1782 (li. 517) and in *Lloyd's Evening Post* 31 May–3 June 1782 (l. 525).

1. *King Stephen's Watch* (ante 17 Jan. 1780 and n. 1) was published Sept. 1782 but it was without Mason's knowledge (post 26 Sept. 1782). In 1788 he published a *Secular Ode* on the Revolution of 1688.

few friends, from whom the chronicles and magazines may steal them. I find by the papers he has reprinted your *Anecdotes*<sup>2</sup> and made them as much too cheap as my *Ode* is too dear, but I suppose you interfered in that matter.<sup>3</sup>

I am told that I have had the honour to have my life printed, not indeed by Dr Johnson, but I fancy by a biographer of the same stamp, for he says I am a republican. If you have the curiosity to read it, I am told it is in a book called *A Companion to the Theatre*.<sup>4</sup> You see I am at a sad loss for a topic to write about when I mention such a trifle. I will therefore conclude with thanking you for sending your *no* intelligence which yet was your best intelligence to Mr Baines about the ballad he was in search for. Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours most heartily,

W. MASON

To MASON, Tuesday 4 June 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 295-7.

Berkeley Square, June 4, 1782.

YOU are very kind, especially as my gout was not worth the inquiry, being only a codicil to the influenza. I have walked about the room today and shall air tomorrow.

I like the colouring of your *Ode*<sup>1</sup> much and do not dislike any

2. Publication of a new (the third, except for vol. iv, which was the second) edition of HW's *Anecdotes of Painting*, in five volumes, including the *Catalogue of Engravers*, at 15 shillings, was announced in the *Public Advertiser* 27 May 1782. The new edition (the first not printed at SH), was in octavo, and compared unfavourably in appearance with the earlier quarto editions.

3. He did: see *post* 4 June 1782.

4. The new edition of David Erskine Baker's *Biographia Dramatica, or A Companion to the Playhouse*, 1782, reviewed in CM Feb. 1782, lii. 77-82. Mason's fears were groundless. The account of him, i. 303-4, begins: 'This gentleman is one of the few authors who is entitled to the

applause of the world, as well for the virtues of his heart as for the excellence of his writings.' He is not called a republican, but is described as a politician 'very active in forming the [Yorkshire] Association.' There is nothing in the notice to which Mason could reasonably take exception. The reviser of Baker's work was Isaac Reed, assisted by George Steevens (MS transcript of a note by Edmond Malone copied, presumably by Edward Cheney, a later owner of the book, in HW's copy of the *Biographia Dramatica*). HW's copy, with his MS notes, is now wsl.

1. *Ode to the Honourable William Pitt*, publication of which was announced in the *Public Advertiser* 28 May 1782.



part of it as you expected; you shall not be made a property of by any printer another time, as my press shall be at your command, unless for anything political; this is not from apprehension of *your* politics, but when I first set up the press, there was a notion that it was intended for that use; on which I vowed and declared it never should be employed either in politics or satire: and I kept so strictly to that resolution, that when I published my defence of General Conway,<sup>2</sup> I had it printed by Almon, though I avowed it.

The cheap edition of my *Anecdotes of Painting* is entirely my own direction, and calculated chiefly for the use of artists, in order to which I omitted the prints to reduce the price. I had another view too; as there have been but few copies of my editions, collectors (not readers) have pushed their price to an extravagant height. I cannot help their being such fools: but I determined that at least people should not give more for my writings than they are worth, unless they chose it.

I will read the imaginary *Life of Mr Mason*,<sup>3</sup> though I seldom do read the romances of the day.

You will be amazed when you hear what Lord Harcourt calls an obligation from me. That is, that he should think it so,—you will not be surprised that when he does think so, his excellent heart should overflow. There are reasons why neither he nor I can write it.

We have at last acquired an ally! the *new* kingdom of Ireland<sup>4</sup> have voted us an assistance of twenty thousand seamen.<sup>5</sup> How will Bates [Bate] or Macpherson contrive<sup>5a</sup> to ascribe *this* to the late miscreants!<sup>6</sup> They have voted Mr Grattan<sup>7</sup> £10,000 for a house, and

2. HW's *Counter-Address to the Public, on the Late Dismission of a General Officer*, 1764. See 'Short Notes,' GRAY i. 40.

3. HW did, and in a marginal MS note in his copy of the *Biographia Dramatica* has corrected the title of Mason's masque from *Cupid and Psyche* to *Sappho*.

4. On 27 May 1782 the Duke of Portland, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, proclaimed to both Irish Houses of Parliament the concurrence of the King and of the English Parliament in the restoration and confirmation of Ireland's rights (*London Courant* 4 June 1782; *ante* 22 April 1782, n. 2).

5. 'To the very great and eternal honour of the people of Ireland, we can as-

sure the public from the most respectable authority, that after agreeing to subscribe the sum of £100,000 for the purpose of raising 20,000 seamen for the British navy, the most popular men immediately went to their respective counties or districts, for the purpose of raising their quota of men, in order to make up the number of men resolved upon' (*London Courant* 4 June).

5a. Previously printed 'continue.'

6. The North ministry, whose supporters tried to claim for it the credit attaching to Rodney's victory of 12 April (*ibid.* 29 May 1782).

7. Henry Grattan (1746–1820), Irish statesman and orator, especially active in the promotion of legislative independence

£40,000 more to purchase for him and his descendants an estate of £2000 a year.<sup>8</sup>

Have you seen Bishop Newton's life?<sup>9</sup> I have only in a *Review*.<sup>10</sup> You may perhaps think it was drawn up by his washerwoman; but it is more probably *mangled* (*v.* the laundress's vocabulary; I do not mean *maimed*) by Lord Mansfield himself; at least he had the MS for some weeks in his possession. It is a most perfect sample of episcopal and justiciary biography, etc.

Prelates will bow and bless the harpy feast.<sup>11</sup>

Stonhewer has been very ill of the influenza and Palgrave a little, but we have had two dry days after fifty-three of rain, and begin to wear our rainbow again. Adieu.

## TO MASON, Thursday 6 June 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 297.

June 6, 1782.

Postscript to my last.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury being confined by the gout, the Cardinal of York<sup>1</sup> made the speech on the Birthday at the head of the Sacred College. He gloried in being admitted to that honour, he spoke with that truth which was their profession, and prayed for the head of the Church in their public and *secret* devotions. He condoled with his Majesty on many disagreeable things that he had been

for Ireland. See W. E. H. Lecky, *A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, 1892, ii. 296–309.

8. The sum of £50,000 to purchase an estate for Grattan and his heirs was voted by the Irish House of Commons 30 May 1782 (*London Courant* 4 and 7 June 1782; *Last Journals* ii. 435; Lecky, *op. cit.* ii. 315–6).

9. *The Works of Thomas Newton, D.D., Late Lord Bishop of Bristol, and Dean of St Paul's* 'in three large volumes royal quarto' was published 9 May 1782 (*Public Advertiser*). Prefixed to the collection is an account of Newton's life written by himself.

10. HW saw the account of Newton's life in Henry Maty's *New Review* May 1782, i. 272–84. This periodical, which had only recently (Feb. 1782) begun publication, was called to HW's attention by Lord Harcourt (HW to Lord Harcourt 3 June 1782).

11. *Ode to the Honourable William Pitt*, l. 78.

1. Markham, so called by HW because of his supposed papistical sentiments (*ante* 10 June and 24 Oct. 1777 and 3 Feb. 1781).

forced to undergo and must have felt, but he could take upon himself to assure him that he would not be deserted.

N.B. I wrote this down immediately, as it was repeated to me by one of the bench<sup>2</sup> who heard it. I asked whether my Lord of Canterbury had the gout in his head or stomach, for such a pound of incense looks as if he was dangerously ill.<sup>3</sup> Bishop Hurd must double the dose to Mrs Hagerdorn *in his secret devotions*.<sup>4</sup>

## TO MASON, Tuesday 25 June 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 298–301.

Berkeley Square, June 25, 1782.

I FIND there is a correspondence commenced between you and Mr Hayley by the Parnassus post.<sup>1</sup> I did not know you were acquainted;<sup>2</sup> I suppose you met at Calliope's: if you love incense, he has fumigated you like a flitch of bacon; however, I hope in the Lord Phœbus that you will not take his advice<sup>3</sup> any more than Pope did that of such another sing-song warbler Lord Lyttelton;<sup>4</sup> nor be persuaded to write an epic poem, that most senseless of all the species of poetic composition and which pedants call the *chef-d'œuvre* of the human mind; well, you may frown, as in duty bound, yet I shall say what I list. Epic poetry is the art of being as long as possible in telling an uninteresting story: and an epic poem is a mixture of history without truth and of romance without imagination. We are well off

2. Not identified.

3. 'The gout I take to be a humour in the blood which will fix somewhere: if in the extremities, bad enough, but better than in the head or stomach' (Cole to HW 30 Oct. 1777, COLE ii. 70). Markham's hopes of succeeding were not fulfilled.

4. Hurd's ecclesiastical advancement was believed by HW and Mason to derive from his friendship with the Queen's Keeper of the Robes, Mrs Hagedorn. See *ante* 19 May 1780 and n. 31.

1. Mitford reads 'poet'; emended by Cunningham and Toynbee. Publication of William Hayley's *Essay on Epic Poetry in Five Epistles to the Reverend Mr Mason*

was announced in the *Public Advertiser* 22 June 1782. HW's copy, with notes, is in vol. 18 of his 'Poems of George III' in the Harvard Library.

2. Mason and Hayley had probably not met before the publication of the *Essay* (post 2 July 1782; *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of William Hayley*, ed. John Johnson, 1823, i. 274–6).

3. The fifth book of the *Essay* is a sustained exhortation to Mason to abandon satire and devote himself to epic poetry.

4. In his 'Epistle to Mr Pope from Rome, 1730' (*The Works of George Lord Lyttelton*, 3d edn, 1776, iii. 97–100), Lyttelton urged Pope to abandon satire.

when from that *mésalliance* there spring some bastards called episodes, that are lucky enough to resemble their romantic mother, more than their solemn father. So far from epic poetry being at the head of composition, I am persuaded that the reason why so exceedingly few have succeeded, is from the absurdity of the species. When nothing has been impossible to genius in every other walk, why has everybody failed in this but the inventor Homer? You will stare, but what are the rest? Virgil with every beauty of expression and harmony that can be conceived has accomplished but an insipid imitation. His hero is a nullity, like Mellefont<sup>5</sup> and the virtuous characters of every comedy, and some of his incidents as the harpies and the ships turned to nymphs, as silly as Mother Goose's tales. Milton, all imagination, and a thousand times more sublime and spirited, has produced a monster. Lucan, who often says more in half a line than Virgil in a whole book, was lost in bombast if he talked for thirty lines together. Claudian and Statius had all his fustian with none of his quintessence. Camoens had more true grandeur than they, but with grosser faults. Dante was extravagant, absurd, disgusting, in short a Methodist parson in Bedlam. Ariosto was a more agreeable *Amadis de Gaul*<sup>6</sup> in a bawdy-house,<sup>7</sup> and Spencer, John Bunyan in rhyme. Tasso wearies one with their insuperable crime of stanza<sup>7a</sup> and by a thousand puerilities that are the very opposite of that dull dignity which is demanded for epic: and Voltaire who retained his good sense in heroics, lost his spirit and fire in them. In short, epic poetry is like what it first celebrated, the heroes of a world that knew nothing better than courage and conquest. It is not suited to an improved and polished state of things. It has continued to degenerate from the founder of the family, and happily expired in the last bastard of the race, Ossian.

Still as Mr Hayley has allowed such a latitude to heroic poesy as to admit the *Lutrin*,<sup>8</sup> *The Dispensary*, and *The Dunciad* as epic poems,<sup>8a</sup> I can forgive a man who recommends to a friend to pen a tragedy, when he will accept of *The Way of the World* as one.

5. In Congreve's *The Double Dealer*.

6. The fifteenth-century prose romance that was responsible for Don Quixote's madness.

7. This phrase was omitted by Mitford, but was supplied by Mrs Toynbee from his MS notebook (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 54).

7a. Possibly, as Dr Chapman suggests, HW wrote 'insufferable riming stanza.' Mr Ketton-Cremer suggests 'chime.'

8. Boileau's mock-epic is mentioned by Hayley in Epistle iii, ll. 304-12.

8a. Epistle iii concludes with a passage (ll. 457-76) on Garth and Pope, but Hayley does not accept *The Dunciad* as an epic.

For Mr Hayley himself, though he chants in good tune, and has now and then pretty lines amongst several both prosaic and obscure, he has, I think no genius, no fire and not a grain of *originality*, the first of merits (in my eyes) in these latter ages, and a more certain mark of genius than in the infancy of the world, when no ground was broken, nor even, in the sportsman's phrase, *foiled*.<sup>9</sup> It is that originality that I admire in your *Heroic Epistle* and in your genuine style, which I trust you will not quit to satisfy the impartial Mr Hayley (who though a good patriot equally cherishes janizaries<sup>10</sup>)

That to you *do not belong*  
*The beauties of envenomed song*.<sup>11</sup>

For writing an epic poem, it would be as wise to set about copying Noah's ark, if Mons. de Buffon<sup>12</sup> should beg you to build a menagerie for a couple of every living creatures upon earth, when there is no longer any danger of a general inundation.

I doubt your new friend will write his readers and his own reputation to death; every poem has a train of prose as long as Cheap-side,<sup>13</sup> with a vast parade of reading that would be less dear if it had any novelty or vivacity to recommend it. I know as little new as he, except that Lord Rockingham is very ill,<sup>14</sup> I believe not without danger; should he fail,<sup>15</sup> there would be a new scene indeed! Adieu!

PS. I find I have said above, every living *creatures*—is not that bad English? and if it is, is not it better than *a couple of every living creature*?

9. 'To foil' is 'to run over or cross (the ground, scent, or track) with the effect of baffling the hounds' (OED).

10. E.g., Gibbon (*ante* 19 May 1780 and 16 Aug. 1781).

11. 'Sublimar Mason! not to thee belong  
 The reptile beauties of envenomed  
 song'

(*Essay on Epic Poetry*, Epistle v, ll. 407–8).

12. Georges-Louis Leclerc (1707–88), Comte de Buffon, the naturalist.

13. Hayley's *Essay on History* (1780), addressed to Gibbon, his *Essay on Painting*

(1781), addressed to Romney, and the *Essay on Epic Poetry* are all heavily annotated. In the 1785 collected edition of Hayley's *Poems and Plays* the notes to *Epic Poetry* take up three times as much space as the poem (vols iii–iv).

14. 'The Marquis of Rockingham now lies dangerously ill. He seemed to be in a fair way of recovery a few days ago, but has since had a relapse' (*London Chronicle* 25–7 June 1782, li. 616).

15. *Sic* in Mitford. Cunningham and Toynbee read 'fall.'

## TO MASON, Monday 1 July 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 301.

Berkeley Square, July 1, 1782.

I CAN tell you but one word, but that is a momentous one. Lord Rockingham died at one o'clock at noon today. It is concluded that Lord Shelburn will succeed him<sup>1</sup> and the American war revive, and many of its authors, you may be sure of all, if *Starvation* is sent for from Edinburgh.<sup>2</sup>

I did not expect the new administration to be long-lived, but it was not of a natural death that I thought it would die.

## FROM MASON, Tuesday 2 July 1782

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WORKSOP 5 JY.

Aston, July 2d, 1782.

DON'T be afraid, I will give you my Bible oath if you demand it that I will never write an epic poem, but 'will stop my ears like the deaf adder to the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely,'<sup>1</sup> which by the way I do not think he does, for where is the wisdom in giving one an analysis of 40 pages of a Spanish poem<sup>2</sup> which analysis proves that it must of necessity be the dullest and foolishlest of them all. However, to answer the polite letter which accompanied Mr Hayley's work I assure you cost me more pains than the planning an epic poem would have done.<sup>3</sup> The difficulty arose chiefly from my having resolved previously not to say one syllable on

1. The King offered the prime minister-ship to Shelburne immediately on learning of Rockingham's death (*Corr. Geo. III* vi. 71).

2. Dundas was summoned and offered a place in the new cabinet as treasurer of the navy, on his own terms—life tenure of the clerkship of the Signet rather than tenure at the King's pleasure (*Corr. Geo. III* vi. 78 and 81; *Last Journals* ii. 468).

1. Psalm 58. 4-5.

2. *La Araucana* by Alonzo de Ercilla y Zúñiga (1533-94) is discussed by Hayley in his *Essay on Epic Poetry* pp. 207-73.

3. Mason's civil but non-committal acknowledgment of Hayley's *Essay* is printed in *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of William Hayley*, ed. John Johnson, 1823, i. 274-5.

the subject, and that because I thought precisely as ill of it as you do.

I have at last seen Bishop Newton's life; 'tis exactly the same sort of prate which I used to hear with so much disgust at the chaplain's table.<sup>4</sup> 'Tis as you say 'a mirror of episcopal biography.'

He's knight o' th' shire and represents them all.<sup>5</sup>

There was a bishop, I think it was Sprat,<sup>6</sup> who thanked God that though he was not educated at Westminster yet he became a bishop.<sup>7</sup> I on the contrary would not have been educated there for the best pair of lawn sleeves in the kingdom,<sup>8</sup> but *de gustibus non est disputandum*.

I have seen lately an extract of a letter from the poetess Miss Seward,<sup>9</sup> whom Mr Hayley praises so much in one of his Epistles;<sup>10</sup> she lays the *Archæological Epistle* roundly at my door and praises it highly, but says Mr Hayley has his doubts about the author.

Who shall decide when (such) doctors disagree?<sup>11</sup>

I have been waiting here above a week for a visit from Mr and Mrs Weddel,<sup>12</sup> who are detained in town by Lord Rockingham's illness. Had it not been for this I believe I should have come through London to Oxfordshire, but as I now find Lord Harcourt has got to Newnham I shall cross the country tomorrow by Birmingham, see Hagley and Mr Shenston's,<sup>13</sup> and as I travel with my own horses not

4. Newton had been a chaplain to the King 1755-61.

5. 'He's knight of the shire, and represents ye all' (Dryden's Epilogue to Etherege's *The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter*, l. 16).

6. Thomas Sprat (1635-1713), Dean of Westminster, 1683, Bp of Rochester, 1684; author of the *History of the Royal Society*.

7. In the seventeenth century Westminster School had a virtual monopoly on the episcopal bench (Reginald Airy, *Westminster*, 1902, pp. 34 and 37). The authority for attributing the anecdote to Sprat has not been found, but the story is repeated by John Sargeant in his *Annals of Westminster School*, 1898, p. 95.

8. Mason's feelings perhaps owe something to the fact that his archbishop, Markham, had been a student at Westminster and later its headmaster.

9. Anna Seward (1742-1809), the 'Swan of Lichfield'; friend and correspondent of Hayley.

10. Hayley described her as 'Potent to soothe the honoured dead, and dart

Congenial virtue through each panting heart;

Potent through spirits masculine to spread Poetic jealousy and envious dread' (*Essay on Epic Poetry*, Epistle iv, ll. 95-8).

11. Pope, *Moral Essays* iii. 1.

12. Elizabeth Ramsden (d. 1831), eldest dau. of Sir John Ramsden, 3d Bt, and half-sister of the Marchioness of Rockingham; m. (1771) William Weddell of Newby, Yorks (Algernon Graves and W. V. Cronin, *A History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1899-1901, iii. 1040-1; see *ante* 20 Aug. 1780, n. 11).

13. Both were on the road from Bir-

reach Nuneham till Saturday or Sunday. From him I mean to make you a visit at Strawberry<sup>14</sup> when you are *really* settled there, unless you have promised to visit him in Oxfordshire; this I shall know in our correspondence which will now be nearer and speedier.

Your most obliged and faithful servant,

W. MASON

I have had a letter from Mr Sherman, whose business is now completely settled, full of gratitude to you and the Duke of Richmond. What will become of us if Lord R. dies?

TO MASON, Monday 8 July 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 303-7.

Monday, July 8, 1782.

**I** WISH you did come to town, for how is it possible to fold up chaos in a letter? nay how can one relate and not have an opinion? I certainly have one, but it is more decided on the colour of dislike than of that of satisfaction. One can scarce avoid retrospect or help saying how the worst might have been prevented, but I have not time to look back even ten days. I will go no farther than last Saturday, when to be sure a fraction of an aristocracy gave itself as ridiculous airs as ever impertinence did. A meeting of the late Marquis's mutes was summoned at Lord Fitzwilliam's,<sup>1</sup> and it was hoped that all present would swear allegiance to the urn of the departed, which was proclaimed to contain all that was precious in our country. The Duke of Richmond was impious enough to think peace with America preferable to those holy cinders,<sup>2</sup> though they are said to contain

mingham to London, the Leasowes (formerly Shenstone's house) being seven miles from Birmingham, and Hagley Park (once the first Lord Lyttelton's) five miles further along the road (David Ogilvy, *A General Itinerary of England and Wales, with Part of Scotland*, 1804, p. 219).

14. Mason visited SH in Oct. 1782 (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 75).

1. William Fitzwilliam (later Wentworth-Fitzwilliam) (1748-1833), 4th E. Fitzwilliam, Rockingham's nephew and heir. The meeting of the Rockingham Whigs at his London house on 6 July 1782 was reported to the King by Lord Shelburne in a letter of 9 July (*Corr. Geo. III* vi. 76-7).

2. That is, preferable to the continued



and to be able to convey a right of transmitting the sceptre and purse of this nation to whom they pleased, or Lord John should please;<sup>3</sup> and his Lordship pleased that the Duke of Portland<sup>4</sup> should be the ostensible and Mr Fox the real monarch of the Whigs,<sup>5</sup> and Mr Fox was of the same opinion; not all the rest were. The Lords Berkeley, Craven and De Ferrars<sup>6</sup> presumed to dissent, and Lord Temple loudly; so nothing excepting Fox and Burke remained in the crucible, but the *caput mortuum*. I hope we shall have a codicil to Magna Charta produced, for we are certainly to have a new War of the Barons, a struggle between the King and some great peers in which the people are to go for nothing.

Don't imagine from what I have been saying, that I am delighted on the other side;<sup>7</sup> no my good friend I am a true Englishman, and am much more easily dissatisfied than pleased. I dislike the new dish that is served up, and shall taste but a few of the old ingredients that are tossed up again, and shall have no stomach at all to the older sauces that will come upon table again, and for which the new removes<sup>8</sup> have made room.

dominance of the administration by Rockingham's adherents: Cavendish, Fox, and Burke. The Duke of Richmond felt that a coalition with other Whig factions was necessary for the promotion of the measures initiated in Rockingham's government.

3. 'Lord John Cavendish seemed so little prepared for the emergency, that he indecently declared in private that now Lord Rockingham was gone he cared no more about politics. This was his first sensation; his next, and which though not uppermost on the loss of Lord Rockingham, was nearest to his heart, was that the House of Cavendish ought to have the exclusive right of naming a prime minister—not that the honour of enjoying such exclusive nomination was all that flattered Lord John's vanity. He could not help looking a little in that nomination to the tractability of the person he should name. Disclaiming ambition in his own person, Lord John did not dislike to govern the prime minister' (*Last Journals* ii. 446; cf. HW to Lady Ossory 7 July 1782 and Lord Fitzmaurice, *Life of William Earl of Shelburne*, 1875-6, iii. 222-3).

4. William Henry Cavendish Bentinck (1738-1809), 3d D. of Portland, 1762; Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland 8 April-15 Aug. 1782; first lord of the Treasury 5 April-Dec. 1783 and 1807-9; home secretary of state 1794-1801. He married (8 Nov. 1766) Lord John's niece, Lady Dorothy Cavendish, only dau. of William, 4th D. of Devonshire.

5. The refusal of the King to accept Portland as prime minister provoked the resignation of Lord John Cavendish and Fox from the cabinet.

6. George Townshend (1753-1811), 4th Lord Ferrers, 1770, cr. (1784) E. of Leicester; 2d M. Townshend of Raynham, 1807.

7. HW violently disliked Shelburne (*Last Journals* ii. 465-8 and *passim*) and believed that Fox was the most capable of the contemporary statesmen. But he feared that disunity among the Whigs would prove to be disastrous for the country, as he wrote to Lady Ossory and to Mann 7 July 1782.

8. Dishes to be changed while the rest of the course remains (Johnson, 1773, quoted in OED *sub* 'remove' sb., 2c). See Mann to HW 31 Jan. 1747, N.S., n. 28.

Well! America and Ireland have had the sense and spirit to assert themselves; that is great comfort. England, alias Nova Scotia, little deserves freedom.

I know nothing certainly of the intended distribution of places. Mr Pitt and Lord Temple I believe are to be secretaries of state.<sup>9</sup>

At this moment perhaps Lord Howe may be fighting the combined squadrons,<sup>10</sup> who could not know that he had above fifteen ships,<sup>11</sup> and he undoubtedly has twenty-three to their twenty-eight or thirty, and five three-deckers to their one,<sup>12</sup> besides the flower of the ocean. We have a better chance by seamen than by politicians. *O Neptune, ora pro nobis!*

I am rejoiced that you do not intend to answer Mr Hayley in heroics. Since gunpowder was invented and heroic virtue was out of fashion, and Circe and Calypso and Armida<sup>14</sup> have left no natural children to inveigle a stray adventurer, whom the gods used to be so good as to assist in seeking his fortune, and help him into mishaps in order to get him out, I see no materials for making anew an old thing called an epic poem. Even demigods have intermarried till their race are become downright *mestises*<sup>15</sup> (I forget the mongrel shades in the colonies) and have little of ethereal clay left in their composition; I mean those half-divinities whom antiquity called patriots, and the moderns, Russels and Sidneys. I could tell you some tales<sup>16</sup> that would make your hair stand on end instead of dipping you in Castalia, but you may trust the new parties for not letting you remain in ignorance; they have mutual tales to tell believe me.

Lord Harcourt, by a letter<sup>17</sup> I have received today, says, you are sit-

9. The rumour concerning Pitt, which proved erroneous, appeared in *London Courant* 5 July 1782. Pitt became chancellor of the Exchequer, Temple, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 188).

10. At the formation of the Rockingham ministry Howe had replaced Derby as commander of the Grand or Channel Fleet. News of activity of the combined fleets of France and Spain had recently prompted the sailing of Howe's fleet on a precautionary cruise (*London Courant* 5 July 1782), and in *Lloyd's Evening Post* 5-8 July (li. 32) the probability that 'the two adverse fleets have met and come to action before this time' was reported. The

story proved to be without foundation (*post* 10 July 1782).

11. The Grand Fleet had been very deficient in personnel when Howe assumed command. See W. M. James, *The British Navy in Adversity*, 1926, p. 367.

12. Howe sailed with a fleet of 22 ships of the line, and was joined by three more as he made his way down the Channel. The enemy had 40 ships (W. M. James, *op. cit.* 369).

14. A sorceress in Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered* who temporarily ensnares the hero, Rinaldo, in a life of sensual pleasure.

15. Half-castes.

16. Which he does in the next letter.

17. Missing.

ting on a rafter and dining out of a hod of mortar;<sup>18</sup> no matter, you are at Nuneham and can stroll about Elysium. Whenever you are tired of it, you will be gladly received at Strawberry, and will find a saucer of hautboys<sup>19</sup> for your dinner. Pray settle the plan for the castle, and bring the measurement of the windows that we may fit the painted glass to them,<sup>20</sup> and above all, torment Lady Harcourt to send me her poems that I may begin printing. I shall be gathered to Caxton and my ancestors if she does not make haste. Adieu.

PS. I was going to seal my letter when good old Lord George Cavendish came in. We talked over very coolly the new schism; I told him fairly that I wished they would, as they had united with Lord Shelburne, have borne with him for three months, entering what caveat or protest they pleased against his continuance, till the peace with America was concluded, Ireland settled, alliances concluded on the continent, and perhaps reconciliation with Holland; and I added, 'My dear Lord, don't you think that this new dissension will be heard with transport in France?' He answered, 'Undoubtedly.' I was answered. I put the same question this morning to Mr Fox—he replied, 'Oh it will do a great deal of mischief.'—Judge.

Tomorrow we shall hear Mr Fox's reasons for his resignation. Lord George owned to me that there might be reasons that could *not* be given;<sup>21</sup> I said, 'My Lord, will worse reasons satisfy the country?'

The most certain thing that will happen is a torrent of abuse on the Duke of Richmond, Lord Shelburne, and Mr Fox; so malignity at least will have its saturnalia. The coarsest waters of the kennel will be thrown on the two former, but by what I hear as yet, there will be ten buckets for one emptied on the latter; and yet the most stinking may be diffused the widest.

18. Because of renovations at Nuneham then in progress. On 4 July 1782 Whitehead wrote to Lord Harcourt: 'On the first reading of your letter I could not help pitying your shattered condition, but on a second perusal I found that, exclusive of the breakfast-room, you were in possession of as much as I ever expected you would be by this time, or indeed, as you will ever make use of when the house is finished, unless you have a good (*bad*)

deal of company' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 351-2).

19. A species of strawberry.

20. HW repeats this request *post* 4 Aug. 1782.

21. Conway insinuated in Parliament that Fox's resignation was prompted by pique that he had been defeated by Shelburne in a contest for place and power (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 165-8).

## TO MASON, Wednesday 10 July 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 307-9.

Berkeley Square, July 10, 1782.

DON'T be frightened: I do not intend to write to you every day; I shall rusticate myself on Friday, and then you will hear little of me more. Now I am not going to tell you the new arrangements, for General Conway forgets them as fast as he hears them. Yet they may be made, and you will learn them from the new writs.<sup>1</sup>

My business is to give you a sketch of yesterday; it was a curious debate opened by a motion of inquiry on a thumping pension for life to Colonel Barré<sup>2</sup> signed by Lord Rockingham, Lord Althorpe and Fred. Montagu,<sup>3</sup> and defended by the two last, Lord John and Grenville.<sup>4</sup> This was one of the tales I reserved—There is another, parallel, about Burke<sup>5</sup> but not a quarter so heavy. The debate soon wandered to the resignations.<sup>6</sup> Charles Fox shone but did not dazzle for his plea was very flimsy,—his suspicion of Lord Shelburne.<sup>7</sup> He attacked General Conway too and (which I think was a high compliment) called him *an innocent*, who knew nothing, thought nothing of men, but looked to measures, and had wrought great good and great evil.<sup>8</sup> Conway avowed that he did look only to measures, not

1. For the Parliamentary elections made necessary by the change of ministry.

2. A vote of censure on the proposed annual grant of £3200 was moved in the House of Commons on 9 July. Barré's friends argued that he had been deprived, improperly, for political reasons, of military offices, and was entitled to compensation. The motion was withdrawn the same day it was made (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 152-88; *Last Journals* ii. 456-7; Lord Fitzmaurice, *Life of William Earl of Shelburne*, 1875-6, iii. 229-30; Christopher Hobhouse, *Fox*, 1934, pp. 141-2).

3. All were lords of the Treasury in the Rockingham administration (Robert Beatson, *Political Index*, 1806, i. 345).

4. James Grenville (1742-1825), cr. (1797) Bn Glastonbury of Butleigh; M. P. Thirk 1765-8, Buckingham city 1770-90, Buckinghamshire 1790-7; lord of the Treasury 1782-3. The new administration

was clearly anxious to have Barré's support.

5. HW's account of Burke's efforts at this time to get the clerkship of the pells, a sinecure office then held by Sir Edward Walpole, is in *Last Journals* ii. 453-6.

6. Of the Cavendish faction: Lord John, Fox, Burke, and Richard Fitzpatrick.

7. Reported in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 172-3.

8. As reported in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 170, Fox said of Conway that he 'had too much magnanimity of character, too much generosity of mind, and too much complaisance to be scrupulous in his inquiries about the niceties and minutiae of the measures of those men with whom he acted' and added that if he were to be asked 'who of all others had contributed the most to the misfortune of the American war? he should be tempted to say, the Right Hon. General; and if again he

men, and produced his political creed reduced to the four articles on which the last brief administration had come into power, viz.—The reduction of the power of the Crown, public economy, the independence of America and that of Ireland; by these tests he desired to be tried and if he abandoned them to be condemned;<sup>9</sup> would the orders of the House permit it, he would leave the paper from which he spoke on the table. Mr Fox not only declared that he regarded men, not measures,<sup>10</sup> but—you will laugh—insisted that the nation calls for the Duke of Portland.<sup>11</sup> The nation to be sure may call *odd men*,<sup>12</sup> but certainly did not call for his Grace, who till this nomination to Ireland, scarce an hundred men knew to exist. He has lived in ducal dudgeon with half a dozen toad-eaters secluded from mankind behind the ramparts of Burlington wall, and overwhelmed by debts without a visible expense of two thousand pounds a year.<sup>13</sup> It is very entertaining that two or three great families<sup>14</sup> should persuade themselves that they have an hereditary and exclusive right of giving us a head without a tongue, nor is it less burlesque to see

should be asked, who was the man with the most upright intentions, and who had pursued measures with the most disinterested integrity? he should say with much pleasure, the Right Hon. General.'

9. Conway's speech is reported in *ibid.* xxiii. 165–8.

10. Consideration of men rather than measures was looked upon by HW as one of the fixed principles of the Rockingham Whigs. In *Mem. Geo. III* iv. 86–8 he comments on the principle as elaborated by Burke in *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents*, 1770.

11. In his speech Fox said: 'One would naturally imagine, in an administration formed on the principles of the men distinguished by the name of the Rockinghams, that upon the decease of that great man . . . the man would be sought and appointed to succeed him who most resembled him in character, in influence, in popularity . . . and the eyes of all men were naturally turned to the Duke of Portland' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 173).

12. HW used the phrase in an earlier crisis: 'It was a good idea of somebody, when no man would accept a place under the new system, that Granville and Bath

were met going about the streets, calling *odd man!* as the hackney-chairmen do when they want a partner' (HW to Mann 14 Feb. 1746).

13. ' . . . The town heard with astonishment that the Rockingham faction set up for first minister the Duke of Portland, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, a novel symptom by which alone he was at all known. Nobody recollected that he had been lord chamberlain in Lord Rockingham's first administration. From that time he had lived in the most stately but most domestic privacy, often in the country, and latterly in Burlington House, lent to him by the Duke of Devonshire, whose sister Portland had married, the Duke of Portland being in too great straits to have a house of his own. His fortune . . . had been noble; but obscure waste, enormous expense in elections . . . and too much compassion for an idle and worthless younger brother . . . had brought him into great distresses' (*Last Journals* ii. 448).

14. Notably the Cavendishes and their allies; in this instance, particularly the Bentincks.

a fraction of an aristocracy demanding pre-eminence without one speaker in the House of Lords but—Lord Derby.<sup>15</sup>

They will receive another blow as sensible as any they have experienced; Sir George Saville disapproves their proud retreat.

If yesterday was not propitious to the renewed Opposition, it was not more flattering to the person of the new premier,<sup>16</sup> who was rudely handled,<sup>17</sup> and defended by a Sir William Wake<sup>18</sup> alone, of whom I never heard before. Burke threw a whole basket of invectives on him collected from the Roman history down to Mother Goose's tales.<sup>19</sup> The voice of the town however does not hail Mr Fox,<sup>20</sup> and yet I question whether Lord Shelburne will not soon be the more unpopular.

I have heard this morning though from no absolute authority that Lord Howe is returned to St Helen's, declaring he had found the combined fleets too strong to be attacked yet;<sup>21</sup> though he has but twenty-four ships, and they thirty, it was yesterday expected that we should hear he had fought, and was victorious. I do not at all know how this is to be taken, that is in what light it is to be interpreted with regard to Lord Keppel,<sup>22</sup> for that will be the consideration on both sides and not the measure or manœuvre. The nation's good will be pretended, and neither side will think of it, except Mr Conway—adieu; I am impatient to be gone; all is barefaced faction; ambition and interest have cut away their visors or sold them *parlous* dear. Both

15. Edward Smith-Stanley (1752–1834), 12th E. of Derby, 1776. HW wrote in his journal 26 Nov. 1778, 'Lord Derby was allowed to have spoken very well, though he was a very raw, light young man, given up to his pleasures. He had been a warm courtier, but was now as warm in Opposition' (*Last Journals* ii. 207).

16. Shelburne.

17. John Lee, M.P. for Clitheroe, solicitor-general during Rockingham's recent brief administration, in a speech in the House of Commons 9 July observed that 'he had not heard one person step forward to say that the Earl of Shelburne was a fit and proper person for the high office he held' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 186–7).

18. Sir William Wake (1742–85), 8th Bt; M.P. Bedford 1774–84 (GEC, *Complete Baronetage* i. 181). His speech is reported in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 187–8.

19. Burke by implication called Shelburne the wolf in the story of Little Red Riding Hood, Catiline, and a Borgia (*ibid.* xxiii. 183).

20. Hobhouse says that it 'would be difficult to exaggerate the chorus of reprobation which greeted Fox's resignation' (Fox, 1934, p. 151).

21. Howe had not returned to St Helens, but he did not risk encountering the superior force of the combined fleets, and there was no engagement (William M. James, *The British Navy in Adversity*, 1926, pp. 369–70).

22. Keppel had assumed the post of first lord of the Admiralty in Rockingham's administration, and, though under obligation to the Cavendish faction, had not resigned with his friends on Shelburne's accession to the premiership, because of his responsibility in naval operations already initiated (*Last Journals* ii. 450–1).

sides are alike: one cannot value either. Whenever the nation gets an advantage, it is like a half-gnawed bone tossed to a dog under the table.

## From MASON, Sunday 14 July 1782

Printed from MS now wsl.

*Address* (in Harcourt's hand): The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London. Free Harcourt.

*Postmark*: OXFORD 15 JY. FREE.

HW has written in pencil on the cover a note for his next letter: 'If you have youth and courage enough to commence a new chase, I have no objection. For myself I confess I am too old, nor am I desirous of aiding and abetting any more Irish adventurers in getting pensions of £3000 a year. I will keep the principles I have always preserved—but they shall lie dormant.'

Nuneham, July 14th, '82.

A THOUSAND thanks to you for your frequent intelligence concerning this strange revolution, concerning which also I can make no comment at present, but what you have done; nor do I suppose I shall be able to make up my own mind about it of some time. Indeed if it be true that Jenkinson has been closeted, as the papers tell us, and if in consequence of that he comes into any ostensible office,<sup>1</sup> I shall not wait for the advent of 'Starvation' from Edinbrough to settle my judgment; I shall then look upon the Butæan system<sup>1a</sup> as fully restored, and I shall pity Mr Conway, the Duke of Richmond, and Mr W. Pitt as three very honest dupes. But at present I will hope better things and console myself with thinking that though the nation will have lost much by losing certain honest men amongst the late seceders from the administration, it may yet finally be a gainer by having got quit of the absurdity of one,<sup>2</sup> whose influence I trust now can be nothing, since he must perforce become the subaltern of C. Fox, in whom I trust he will not find the implicit acquiescence of his late leader now departed.

I have brought with me hither a precious *dépôt* which at my earnest solicitation you entrusted me with at York, *videlicet* Doctoure

1. Jenkinson, a confidant of the King, came into no 'ostensible office' at this time.

1a. The principles of absolutism that had allegedly been instilled in George III

by Lord Bute and by the King's other Scottish advisers.

2. HW has written above this word 'Lord J[ohn] C[avendish].'

Mylles's edition of Rowley,<sup>3</sup> and this I shall send you by the first safe hand. I shall also if you please return you your notes on certain poems,<sup>4</sup> that they may be increased at your leisure, if you so choose;<sup>5</sup> though I shall do this with some reluctance, fearing a little lest, by hoping for more, I may lose what I have.

We are here in a most chaotic state, and dine as if among the ruins of Palmyra,<sup>6</sup> with a broken frieze of Stuart's<sup>7</sup> in one corner, and a French moulding (I know not its name) which is to be its substitute in another; in the mean while we sigh for something Gothic,<sup>8</sup> as preferable to either. For my own part I sigh for nothing but the sun, or what is in my mind always preferable to him, especially in summer, a good West-Riding Yorkshire fire.

Lady Harcourt sends her kindest compliments to you, and desires you would be pleased to send a ticket for seeing Strawberry Hill to a friend of hers, Mr Wilmot<sup>9</sup> in Bloomsbury Square. I have had no time to talk to her yet about her poems, nor has she I fear time to correct them.

Lord Harcourt and she join in all kindnesses with your

Much obliged and most sincere servant,

W. MASON

TO MASON, Wednesday 17 July 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 312-4.

Strawberry Hill, July 17, 1782.

**I** ANSWER your letter directly, that I may lose no time in obeying Lady Harcourt's commands. I have very little else to say; knowing and intending to know nothing since I left London. A few

3. HW had sent Mason his annotated copy in January (*ante* 10 Jan. 1782).

4. Mason's satirical poems (*ante* 30 March and 2 April 1782).

5. Notes by HW on Mason's later satires have not been found, though they were apparently begun (*post* 17 July 1782).

6. Robert Wood's *The Ruins of Palmyra*, 1753, contributed greatly to the eighteenth-century taste for Greek architecture and decoration.

7. James Stuart (1713-88), 'Athenian' Stuart, painter, architect, and pioneer of classical archæology. Nuneham contains specimens of his work as architect (*Harcourt Papers* iii. 190 and 200).

8. Mason and HW hoped that a Gothic tower would be erected at Nuneham (*post* 4 Aug. 1782).

9. Henry Wilmot (ca 1710-94), at the time of his death 'principal secretary to the Lord Chancellor and solicitor of taxes'



words in answer to yours will suffice. My two friends<sup>1</sup> could do no other than they did, being persuaded from the importance of what was pending abroad, that they should be criminal in quitting at such a moment. Mr Conway in particular had differed and carried the very point against Mr Fox, on which the latter pretends to have broken. It would have been extraordinary indeed if Conway had made that a plea for resigning!

As to the consequences of the rupture, I have no doubt but that they will be the restoration of the old system, sooner or later, in whole or in part, but so I foresaw they would be the moment Lord Rockingham died. Indeed that was the intention before he came in, for so early had the division begun, or rather there never had been any union. Pride, rashness, folly and knavery have dissipated even pretences, and everything is to begin anew. If you have youth or courage enough to commence a fresh chase, I have no objection. For myself, I confess I am too old; nor am I eager to be aiding and abetting more Irish adventurers in getting pensions of £3000 a year.<sup>2</sup> They have picked the pockets of others full as honest as themselves, and call it saving the nation's money! I shall preserve the principles I have always maintained, but merely as old-fashioned Gothic relics, that are of no use. Some mischiefs are prevented, and now and then some little advantage is obtained for the country *par bricole* by opposition, but you see, and I earlier saw, how all oppositions when successful terminate. But I doubt the question, I mean in practice, is reduced to this. Kings want to have slaves for nothing. Patriots want to be richly paid for being slaves. All therefore that liberty gets is by having the question undecided; opposition keeps it undecided, and implies that there is something to be gotten by it. Thus I am glad there will be a new Opposition, but as to believing in its views or expecting any benefit to my country from its success, you will excuse me.

I shall be glad to receive *my notes*:<sup>3</sup> I have kept no copy and wanted to see them, as I have begun the continuation,<sup>4</sup> and would not have the style very incongruous; but I had much rather you would bring them yourself, you promised me a visit: the uninhabitable state of

(GM 1794, lxiv pt ii. 770; *Directory to the Nobility, Gentry . . . in London . . . for 1793*, p. 50).

in Dublin. His pension is discussed *ante* 10 July 1782.

3. HW's notes on Mason's satirical poems.

4. Missing.

1. Conway and Richmond.

2. An allusion to Barré, who was born

Nuneham makes it impossible for me to come to you. Let us amuse ourselves with pleasanter objects than politics, nothing is left of England but the corpse, which you see is very carrion, for the vultures prey on it. I can tell you much of what has passed of late; but for the future am determined neither to think on or concern myself with public affairs. My chief business, if Lady Harcourt and you please, shall be to be her printer and your commentator, and the more you both employ me, the better I shall be satisfied.

PS. It is not probable that the ticket should reach Mr Wilmot before Saturday, but as I am to have some *archæologists*<sup>5</sup> that day, I was forced to except<sup>6</sup> it. I would not haggle with Lady Harcourt or should have wished to fix the day, for I have been so invaded lately and had so many quarrels, that I am forced to be rigorous about my rules and restrict the number to *four*, as I have been seriously abused for having made some exceptions.

### TO MASON, Sunday 4 August 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 314-6.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 4, 1782.

I HAVE received your or rather my volume<sup>1</sup> and the notes.<sup>2</sup> I had already sketched the preface,<sup>3</sup> but not having the *Epistle* here I could proceed no further. However as I must go to town tomorrow I shall bring one down with me; but probably finish this letter there, for I have nothing to tell you and I am sure am not in your debt, for letters or a visit. Nay I do not perceive that your presence at Nuneham advances any work there, I have neither received Lady Harcourt's MS nor a design for the Gothic building, which my painted glass is to deck.<sup>4</sup> Does your being within the vortex of Oxford benumb all your faculties?

5. Richard Gough and John Nichols (COLE ii. 331), both members of the Society of Antiquaries of London and contributors to their publication, *Archæologia*.

6. Mitford reads 'accept'; emended by Cunningham.

1. HW's copy of Milles's edition of *Rowley* (*ante* 14 July 1782).

2. HW's notes on Mason's satirical poems.

3. To his notes (missing) on the *Archæological Epistle*.

4. The Gothic tower alluded to *ante*

I have borrowed and been reading Monsieur de Lille's poem on gardening;<sup>5</sup> it is a poor affair, with here and there, but rarely, a few pretty lines amidst hundreds of very flat. He seems to have no scientific taste in the matter, but to have picked up some lean ideas, which he repeats over and over, and tries to embellish with modern philosophy, a mode more impertinent than their native levity. Their beards are as factitious and awkward as their crooks and scrips were when they used to write about their *bergères* and *hameaux*, and dress Pan and satyrs in flesh-coloured lutestring; you will like better to hear sayings of George Selwyn; on Lord Camden's son<sup>6</sup> having another place, he said, '*Sat prata biberunt*,'<sup>7</sup> and that the nomination of the Duke of Portland for first lord of the Treasury put him in mind of an old Presbyterian tract, called *A Shove to a Heavy \*\*\*<sup>7a</sup> Christian*. In short, he who never read anything, has always a quotation ready and apropos.

Lord Monboddo has proposed himself to Mrs Garrick,<sup>8</sup> but she rejected *the union*, as the Scots threaten to do,<sup>9</sup> and as it would be lucky if they did—much luckier if they always had, instead of sending all their lean cattle to be fatted in our pastures.

Pray tell Lord Harcourt that poor Clive is better, yet her fits of the jaundice return so often that I much doubt her recovery.<sup>10</sup> Indeed the apothecary fears her liver is affected—she is shrunk to an astonishing degree.

8 and 14 July 1782, and in HW to Lord Harcourt 7 Sept. 1782. A year later HW was still mentioning it (*post* 9 June 1783), but it was never built.

5. *Les Jardins, ou l'art d'embellir les paysages*, 1782, by Abbé Jacques Delille (1738–1813).

6. John Jeffreys Pratt (1759–1840), 2d E. Camden, 1794, cr. (1812) Marquess Camden, had been made one of the tellers of the Exchequer in 1780, and in the new administration was named one of the lords of the Admiralty.

7. 'The meadows have drunk enough' (Virgil, *Eclogues* iii. 111).

7a. *Sic*; presumably HW wrote *Arsed*. The tract has not been identified.

8. Eva Maria Veigel (1725–1822), Viennese dancer who assumed the name of 'Violette' or 'La Violette'; m. (1749) David Garrick. The letter in which the proposal was made was still being shown about by

Mrs Garrick the following June, to the 'high entertainment' of her guests (*Mary Hamilton, afterwards Mrs John Dickenson, at Court and at Home, from Letters and Diaries, 1756 to 1816*, ed. Elizabeth and Florence Anson, 1925, p. 137). Lord Monboddo, who was a widower, was also said to have proposed marriage to Hannah More (M. G. Jones, *Hannah More*, Cambridge, 1952, p. 62).

9. In his journal for 20 March 1782 HW recorded that Dundas, hearing that Burke proposed the abolition of some Scottish sinecures, had said: 'Let him take care; Scotland is ready to break the Union' (*Last Journals* ii. 436).

10. 'The public's old friend, Mrs Clive, is not likely long to survive; she is now very dangerously ill, in the worst stage of the jaundice, at her villa on Strawberry Hill' (*Public Advertiser* 30 July 1782). She lived until 1785.

Lady Di Beauclerc is painting a room<sup>11</sup> at her charming villa that was Mr Gyles's,<sup>12</sup> and that I have christened *Spencer Grove*. It is nothing but a row of lilacs in festoons on green paper, but executed in as great a style as Michael Angelo would have done for a pope's villa; and without even making a sketch. You would know the *countenance of every* single flower, and call them by their names,<sup>13</sup> but alas! those glorious wreaths that you would wish to cut out and glaze, were any glasses large enough, are painted in water-colours and will not last two summers; in each panel of the surbase she has painted a sprig or chaplet of geranium or ivy or periwinkle, and every one is a capital picture. Every plant has its identic character as her human figures have; you have never seen my picture of her gipsies telling a country girl's fortune,<sup>14</sup> but I don't pity you, you might see it if you would, but I never wish any one to do what is not done but by solicitation.

Berkeley Square, 6th.

I am in town, but it looks as if nobody else was, every house is shut up. I don't understand the language of bricks, or I dare to say I could send you very entertaining dialogues, more entertaining than what servants say to one another of their masters, and a good deal more true, and I dare to say still less favourable.

11. Described in Mrs Steuart Erskine, *Lady Diana Beauclerk*, 1903, p. 111, and HW's postscript (1784) to 'The Parish Register of Twickenham' (BERRY ii. 252 and nn. 1-3).

12. Daniel Giles (ca 1725-1800), director of the Bank of England, its deputy-governor 1793-5, and governor 1796-7 (*Court and City Registers* and GM 1800, lxx pt ii. 798). His villa at Twickenham, Little Marble Hill, stood on the site of a cottage occupied by Mrs Clive before she came to Little SH ca 1754 (R. S. Cobbett, *Memorials of Twickenham*, 1872, p. 245; HW to Bentley 3 Nov. 1754).

13. Mason and Harcourt apparently

laughed over HW's account of the lilacs. See post p. 354.

14. Hung on the chimney side of the Red Bedchamber. 'Gipsies telling a country maiden her fortune at the entrance of a beech wood; a most beautiful drawing in water-colours, designed and executed by Lady Diana Beauclerc in 1781; the *chef-d'œuvre* of her works' ('Des. of SH,' *Works* ii. 436). It was sold SH xxii. 101. Another painting of the same subject with a few variations in the details now hangs in the Victoria and Albert Museum (*Catalogue of Water-Colour Paintings*, 1927, p. 31) and is reproduced in Mrs Steuart Erskine's *Lady Diana Beauclerk*, p. 209.

## TO MASON, Friday 20 September 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 317-8.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 20, 1782.

YOU are a very wayward brother, and were not I the sweetest-tempered angel upon earth, we should infallibly quarrel; you have broken your word<sup>1</sup> and then grow sulky because you are in the wrong. I have tempted you and scolded you, and *agacé'd* you indirectly to no purpose, but I know how to punish you out of your own law-book which orders one most charitably to heap coals of fire on those who are to blame. This suits my disposition too better than pouting, for I have so little time left that I am resolved not to throw any of it away upon ill-humour. So if your majestic silence is to last the Lord knows why, you must be cross alone, for I shall appear at Nuneham next month<sup>2</sup> when I am summoned, and be as glad to see you as if you was the most reasonable person in the world.

The newspapers say that Mr Stratford's play of *Lord Russel* has been offered and accepted at Drury Lane.<sup>3</sup> I conclude, cut for the stage by Master Doctor Cumberland, who I know had taken it in hand;<sup>4</sup> what a delicious potion must a bumper of red-hot lava smoking from Vesuvius be, when extinguished by a double quantity of the coldest aconite! But how can the royalist empiric have been able to convert a Whig bonfire into an illumination to the honour of Majesty? oh! yes, such things may be: I have seen such.

If you have a mind that this letter should be longer, you must suppose that the two following pages are filled with accounts of robberies and murders. I know enough, and know nothing else,<sup>5</sup> but as half of them are lies you may as well imagine them as read the inventions. The papers are so full of lies that I have lately proposed as an economic plan that every family should invent its own *gazette*.

1. That he would visit SH, as promised *ante* 2 July 1782.

2. HW did not go (HW to Harcourt 23 Oct. 1782).

3. 'A tragedy founded on the lamentable history of the immortal Russel, and written by a gentleman of Ireland, eminently distinguished in the republic of letters, we understand, is to be brought out this season at Drury Lane Theatre,

with new scenes, dresses, and decorations' (*London Courant* 18 Sept. 1782). The report proved premature. See *ante* 6 April 1782 *bis* and n. 1.

4. Mentioned *ante* 14 April 1782.

5. The outbreak of lawlessness in the vicinity of Twickenham is a recurring theme in HW's letters of the late summer and autumn of 1782.

The housekeeper might give it out with the napkins in a morning, and it would serve for the day as well as what the newsman brings. I like this way too of giving you *carte blanche*, because it is an exact answer to your two or three letters which you have never written. Adieu.

### From MASON, Thursday 26 September 1782

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: OXFORD 27 SE.

Nuneham, Sept. 26th, '82.

**I** CONFESS myself to be the most atrocious of epistolary sinners, and after so short yet so plenary a confession have nothing further to say than to beg your absolution, which perhaps you will the more readily grant when I give you the *verbum sacerdotis* that if I had been less sinful I should only have been the more dull for having had nothing to say that could in any sort have amused you. My letters must consequently have been worse than no letters at all, and if you want further proof take it from this which will be a just specimen of what its two predecessors would have been had they come into existence and been born in due time.

Our *lambris doré* and all our other Frencheries go on so slowly that I have my doubts whether we shall be able to receive the party that you were to have come with this next month, and if you should choose to come alone, we have an English dead-white painter who would presently give you the headache or stomach-ache and drive you away again. In short, I see so little chance of meeting you here that I am planning a scheme with Stonhewer (who is here for a few days) of leaving this place about the 20th of October, and, if he can be then in London, of going to him and from thence of visiting you at Strawberry,<sup>1</sup> but this must be done between the 20th and 28, for on the 30th I must be at York.<sup>2</sup> All this I dare not tell Lord Harcourt, who I know expects me to stay here till the last moment.

His Lordship has got over from Paris with a print of the *tombeau*

1. On 22 Oct. 1782 Mason wrote to Lord Harcourt that he had been at SH (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 75).

2. For the meeting of the Committee of Association on 31 Oct. 1782 (*Wyvill, Political Papers* ii. 1).

of Jean-Jacque and another of his introduction into the *Champs Élysées*,<sup>3</sup> a French poem on *jardins*,<sup>4</sup> but as it is gone to Oxford to be bound I can give you no further account of it except that he holds with Sir W. Chambers that the Chinese are our models.<sup>5</sup> The author's name I have also forgot, but as the notes to my new edition of my *E[nglish] Garden* is not printed off, I shall perhaps add one *sur son sujet* if on reading him I find him worth notice or notifying;<sup>6</sup> which puts me in mind to ask you whether you have thought it worth while to notify *King Stephen's Watch*, which I hear is printed as a pamphlet and most impudently attributed to your humble servant,<sup>7</sup> whose back (Heaven be thanked) is broad enough to bear all book-seller flams whatever.

You shall hear from me again when I can fix my journey, for as I said before, I despair of seeing you here, though the Lord and the Lady do not, who are as much yours as

Your dutiful though remiss servant,

W. M.

### From MASON, Saturday 23 November 1782

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: YORK 25 NO.

York, Nov. 23d, 1782.

IT is high time that I should advertise you that I have commenced a new quarter's residence here, which will continue till the 11th of next February; and that I am now starving myself in a

3. Probably that described in Fernand, Comte de Girardin, *Iconographie de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, [1908], p. 115, as 'une pièce fort connue et fort bien gravée, ayant pour légende: *Arrivée de J. J. Rousseau aux Champs-Élysées*,' sketched by Jean-Michel Moreau ('Moreau le jeune') (1741-1814) and engraved in 1782 by Charles-François-Adrien Macret (1750-83).

4. Almost certainly the Abbé Jacques Delille's *Les Jardins*, already mentioned to Mason by HW (*ante* 4 Aug. 1782).

5. In a long note (*Les Jardins*, 1782, pp. 97-107) Delille translates a passage from Chambers's *Dissertation*.

6. Delille is not mentioned in the notes to *The English Garden*.

7. Mason wrote it; see *ante* 17 Jan. 1780 and n. 1. It is described on the title-page as 'by the author of the Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers, Knt,' and the 'Advertisement' states that it 'universally passes for the work of Mr Mason, author of *Elfrida*.'

cold cathedral that I may enjoy the sunshine of the following August, Sept. and Oct., which may perhaps disappoint me as much as the three last did. I supplicate in the mean time your correspondence, 'off youre Charitie write to the Soule of William Mason clerk which residethe in York thre calendere moneths, off whose wretched estate I praye you have mercie.' As to any return I can make you, you are not to look for it except perhaps about the 19th of next month when a county meeting<sup>1</sup> may perhaps give my dulness and the dulness of the place a fillip. I know not whether I spell right or no.

The winter here sets in so severely, that if it does so in the south I fancy it has ere this driven you from Strawberry to Berkley Square. Pray write soon and believe me always

Most truly yours,

W. MASON

To MASON, Wednesday 27 November 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 321-2.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 27, 1782.

ALAS! I am totally incapacitated for being your gazetteer: you see I cannot pen my newspaper myself,<sup>1</sup> nor see people to tell me news, nor have I scarce voice enough to dictate if I knew any. In short, I have the gout in five places without reckoning subdivisions of fingers: moreover, I have a higher fever than usual; so<sup>2</sup> that if the gout does not kill me, perhaps one of his hussars may. I had been in town but three days<sup>3</sup> when I was seized and have grown much worse ever since, yet not having had much pain, my patience is not exhausted.

As I am no stock-jobber I have not calculated my own belief about peace or war:<sup>4</sup> I wait for my apothecary with more earnestness, than

1. An account of the meeting is printed in Wyvill, *Political Papers* ii. 38-71.

1. This letter was presumably written by Kirgate.

2. Mitford reads 'or.'

3. HW probably came to town on 20 Nov. He was still at SH on 19 Nov. (Hist.

MSS Comm., 12th Report, App. X [Charlemont MSS], 1891, p. 422) and was suffering from the gout on 23 Nov. (HW to Mann 26 Nov. 1782).

4. It was well known that negotiations with America were in progress, but there had been no announcement concerning their success. A preliminary agreement



for the decisive courier. All factions I suppose are as much at bay, though probably with far less indifference. I wish the world well and therefore desire peace; but what have I to wish but not to suffer? I shall not send this away till tomorrow, that if I should have a tolerable night which will be my first, I may tell you so.

28th.<sup>5</sup>

I have had a quiet night and very little fever today, and hope my disorder has taken a favourable turn.

From MASON, Wednesday 4 December 1782

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: YORK 6 DE.

York, Dec. 4th, 1782.

**T**HOUGH your postscript gives me hopes that your gout is going off, yet I cannot help making my inquiries in hopes that a speedy answer from you may tell me that it is entirely gone, though I fear this very severe weather is against you.

In my last I forgot to mention that I some time ago received a very civil message for you from Mr Gilpin, intimating that if you would do him the honour to accept one of his drawings<sup>2</sup> and give it a place in your collection he would send you one. This I have already answered for you in as civil an affirmative, and therefore you have nothing to do but thank him<sup>2</sup> for it when it does come. I fancy one of his tours on the Wye is either published or soon will be,<sup>3</sup> for I received a book from him by way of specimen<sup>4</sup> some time ago. The aquatinta plates<sup>5</sup> are the best imitations of his style that can be;

was signed by England and America at Paris 30 Nov. 1782, and articles signed by England, France, and Spain 20 Jan. 1783 brought about a general armistice. The formal peace was signed 3 Sept. 1783.

5. Previously printed '26th.'

1. Presumably that mentioned in 'Des. of SH,' *Works* ii. 438, as a 'fine drawing in water-colours by the Reverend Mr Gilpin.'

2. HW apparently did through Mason (*post* 7 Dec. 1782).

3. On the title-page Gilpin's *Observations on the River Wye* is dated 1782.

4. The book is dedicated to Mason.

5. According to Gilpin, the drawings were 'etched by a young man, a relation of mine' (*Observations on the River Wye*, p. vi), probably William Sawrey Gilpin. See *ante* 1 April 1781 and n. 6.

I am sure you will be pleased with them, and you would do well to send to Blamire<sup>6</sup> in the Strand near Northumberland House to secure a good impression.

Pray what authority had you to say that Mr Pope's mother was Cooper's daughter?<sup>7</sup> which authority I followed in the print my servant etched from Richardson's drawing.<sup>8</sup> The *Biog. Britannica*<sup>9</sup> and Ruffhead<sup>10</sup> and Warburton's edition<sup>11</sup> (see note to the 381 line of the *Prologue to the Satires*) call her the daughter of William Turner, Esq., of York,<sup>12</sup> and in the parish of Worsbro', a village very near Lord Strafford, is the following register:

1643.<sup>13</sup> Edeth the daughter of Mr William Turner, bapt. 18 June.

which Mr Brooke<sup>14</sup> one of the Heralds who is writing an account of Yorkshire families<sup>15</sup> says is the same person. All this it is true is of little moment. But it is archæological, and does very well to make my letter of a more competent length when I have nothing better to say, except that I am

Most sincerely yours,

W. MASON

What peace! so long as the whoredoms of thy Mother Jessebel and her witchcrafts are so many?<sup>16</sup>

6. Richmond Blamire (d. 1797), stationer (GM 1797, lxvii pt ii. 616).

7. In his *Description of SH*, 1774, HW described (p. 69) two drawings in the Red Bedchamber: 'The father of Pope as he lay dead; drawn by his father-in-law Cooper. . . Mrs Editha Cooper, mother of Pope.' Mrs Pope was Edith Turner of York. See the following letter for HW's answer.

8. HW pasted a copy of Charles Carter's print in his extra-illustrated copy of the 1784 *Des. of SH* (now wsl) at p. 30. See illustration for Mason's incorrect description.

9. *Biographia Britannica*, 1747-66, v. 3404 note A.

10. Owen Ruffhead (1723-69), miscellaneous writer. He gave an account of Pope's mother in his *Life of Alexander Pope*, 1769, p. 10.

11. *The Works of Alexander Pope*, ed. William Warburton, 1751, iv. 42-3.

12. William Turner (1597-1665), member of a substantial Roman Catholic Yorkshire family (Robert Davies, *Pope: Additional Facts concerning His Maternal Ancestry*, 1858, pp. 27 and 47).

13. An error for 1642 (Joseph Hunter, *Pope: His Descent and Family Connections*, 1857, p. 34; George Sherburn, *The Early Career of Alexander Pope*, Oxford, 1934, p. 32).

14. John Charles Brooke (1748-94), Somerset Herald 1777-94.

15. Never published. Brooke bequeathed his manuscripts to the College of Arms, but a small collection of his Yorkshire pedigrees is now preserved in the British Museum (Add. MSS 21184).

16. 'And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many' (2 Kings 9. 22).



*J. Richardson delin. 1731*

*C. Carter fecit. Aqua forti. 1774.*

**M<sup>RS</sup> POPE.**

*Daughter of Samuel Cooper, Painter, & Mother of Alexander Pope, from  
an Original Drawing of J. Richardson Sen. now in the Collection  
of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Horace Walpole, at Strawberry Hill.*

**MRS POPE, BY JONATHAN RICHARDSON, 1731**



Pray when you are well enough to see Lady Craven (whom Lord Strafford calls your *Sappho*)<sup>17</sup> ask her after her *lawn-sleeved Phaon*,<sup>18</sup> my worthy diocesan.<sup>19</sup>

## TO MASON, Saturday 7 December 1782

Printed from Mitford ii. 324-5. It was apparently dictated to Kirgate.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 7, 1782.

**I** HAVE been so extremely ill that I say a great deal when I tell you I think I am recovering. Whether I shall recover even to where I was before seems very doubtful to me. The attack, though the fit was very short, was so violent and I have so little strength, that it will require much time at least to re-establish me.

Thus much I could not help saying to your kind inquiry but neither my head nor my breast will let me say much more.

I thank you for accepting Mr Gilpin's very obliging offer which I shall much value and beg you to thank him for.

What I said of Pope's mother was taken from Vertue's MSS,<sup>1</sup> but I had made a mistake which is corrected in the new edition of the *Anecdotes*.<sup>2</sup> Samuel Cooper's wife<sup>3</sup> was sister of Pope's mother and therefore Cooper was brother-in-law of Pope's father.

I am not likely to see Sappho soon: in the mean time she has my free leave to indemnify herself with the high priest of Lemnos.<sup>3a</sup>

My poor head is not at all a receptacle for politics, and my voice as little fit to talk of them, especially when all is uncertainty and con-

17. HW had eulogized her poetic talents in four couplets, printed at SH as a surprise for her when she visited the Press in 1775 (Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 214-7).

18. The young boatman who spurned Sappho's advances and thus was the cause of her leap from the Leucadian rock. The story had recently been the theme of Mason's *Sappho*.

19. The nature of Lady Craven's admiration for Dr Markham is unexplained.

1. HW on 22 Aug. 1758 purchased about fifty volumes of the manuscripts of George Vertue (1684-1756), engraver and antiquary, from Vertue's widow, and used them as the basis of his *Anecdotes of Painting*. See 'Short Notes,' GRAY i. 33.

2. HW had also correctly written that 'Pope's mother was sister of Cooper's wife' in the first two editions of the *Anecdotes* (iii. 63 and iii. 67). Mason had presumably seen the mistaken identification in the 1774 *Des. of SH*. In one of his copies of this edition (now wsl) HW has corrected the text, but he failed to correct it in the 1784 *Des. of SH*.

3. Christiana Turner (1623-94) m. Samuel Cooper the painter. She was Pope's godmother (George Sherburn, *The Early Career of Alexander Pope*, Oxford, 1934, p. 33).

3a. In Mason's drama (II. iii) Sappho in disguise calls herself 'a nymph of Lemnos.'

jecture, nor is the busy world a scene for me, who have just made shift to linger on the threshold.

Adieu, my dear Sir, whenever I am able I will write again.<sup>4</sup>

From MASON, Saturday 18 January 1783

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: To the Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: YORK <?20> JA.

York, Jan. 18th, 1783.

I HAVE heard frequently from Mr Stonhewer and Lord Harcourt that you had recovered from your late fit and that a lameness in your hand was the only cause that I did not hear from you and this (as I had literally nothing to say that could in any sort amuse you) prevented me from writing to make as they call it obliging inquiries.

As to our reports, petitions, etc.,<sup>1</sup> you reckon not about them, neither indeed have you any occasion, for I take for granted they will all end in smoke. Nevertheless I do firmly believe that if Lord North dares to give that general and decided opposition to Parliamentary reformation which it is said he intends, a flame will arise out of our smoke which will be found hard to quench, till he has suffered for the evils he has brought on this wretched nation. As to his present strength, I think we are entirely obliged to the Rockingham administration for that, who should never have accepted places till he and two others had been impeached.<sup>2</sup> This is my present political creed and so ends my catechism. Yet one word more, I think that Burke's mad obloquy against Lord Shelbourne<sup>3</sup> and those virulent pamphlets<sup>4</sup> in which

4. Mitford (followed by Cunningham and Toynbee) here continues with the text that we have conjecturally redated ca 21 Jan. 1783. See preliminary note to that letter.

1. That is, business of the Yorkshire Association (Wyvill, *Political Papers* ii. 35-42 and 236-43).

2. HW had advocated proceedings against the North ministry (*Last Journals* ii. 430-1 and *ante* 2 April 1782 and n. 3). Mason's 'two others' may have been

Lord George Germain and Lord Sandwich.

3. On 9 July 1782 (*ante* 10 July 1782).

4. An anonymous *Letter to the Right Honourable the Earl of Shelburne*, noticed in the 'Monthly Catalogue' for Oct. 1782 of the *Critical Review* (liv. 317), and, particularly, *A Defence of the Right Honourable the Earl of Shelburne, from the Reproaches of His Numerous Enemies*, described in the *Critical Review* for Nov. 1782 (liv. 402-3) as 'a manifesto on the part of the Foxians' and as abounding

he certainly must have had a hand<sup>5</sup> will do more to fix him in his office than anything else. By coming into Yorkshire to Lord Fitzwilliam's last summer and there wrangling with various of his Lordship's visitors about Parliamentary reform, he<sup>6</sup> in like manner indisposed several gentlemen of property and consequence against that noble Lord; if therefore he<sup>7</sup> has not a quarter of that consequence which Lord R[ockingham] had (which will certainly be the case) in this county, he may lay it all to the effect of his friend's eloquence.

I have heard that your printing-house has been robbed.<sup>8</sup> I hope you have lost nothing of great consequence. On this topic I think you might employ another hand.<sup>9</sup> Adieu. I am going in my character of Justice of the Peace to attend at St Peter's session.<sup>10</sup> Pray have you heard any particulars of our Archbishop's speech to the Queen? I hear it was on the old topic.<sup>11</sup>

Yours most sincerely,

W. MASON

### TO MASON, ?ca Tuesday 21 January 1783

Printed from Mitford ii. 325-7, where it appears as a continuation of *ante* 7 Dec. 1782. But it was clearly written at a later time, and the first sentence seems to answer Mason's opening remark *ante* 18 Jan.

**I**T is true that I am tolerably recovered except in my right hand which never will recover, for all joints are so encrusted with chalkstones that I can scarce move any but my thumb; and though as you perceive I can still write by the help of the last, it is so slowly and

'more in declamation and severe strokes of satire, than in fair argument or a proper statement of fact.' Four editions of the *Defence* were published in 1782, and five more in the following year (BM Cat.). The author was Dennis O'Bryen (1755-1832), dramatist and political pamphleteer. In HW's copy of the *Letter* he has noted below the date, 'October,' and in his copy of the *Defence* (4th edn), 'November.'

5. Mason's suggestion is uncorroborated, but O'Bryen was an associate of Burke.

6. Burke.

7. Lord Fitzwilliam.

8. An unfounded report.

9. This suggests that HW had expressed doubts, now known to be justified, of Kirgate's honesty.

10. That is, the quarter sessions held at the Hall of Pleas near the gates of York Minster (Cathedral Church of St Peter) (William Hargrove, *History and Description of York*, York, 1818, ii. 312).

11. Presumably his opposition to the Yorkshire Association. No report of the speech has been found.

with so much uneasiness that I commonly make Kirgate write for me.

When one is grown so old and so helpless, and foresees as I do that the next severe fit will probably carry me off, you will not wonder that I care very little for what is passing and less for what is to happen when I am gone. Politics I have done with, and should were I in a more vigorous state. To me there is a new generation, and nothing has less decorum than an old man pretending to belong to another age. My notions were all embraced above forty years ago, and have never varied. They had little weight with anybody when I was younger. I should still less expect them to listen to an antediluvian. Why should I expect it; do such ancients as I deign to conform to new modes? I cannot think Mrs Siddons' the greatest prodigy that ever appeared, nor go to see her act the same part every week and cry my eyes out every time. Were I five and twenty, I suppose I should weep myself blind, for she is a fine actress, and fashion would make me think a brilliant what now seems to me only a very good rose diamond.<sup>2</sup>

Still it is not that I am not very willing to be amused, and do try to divert myself as well as I can, and intend to do so to the end of my lease. For example I have lately seen an essay on gardening written by Mons. Girardin,<sup>3</sup> Rousseau's grave-digger. There are some sensible ideas in it, but as the French write by the laws of fashion more than by those of common sense, his rules are far from being all practicable. As it is the *ton* too to talk agriculture, his book concludes with it,<sup>4</sup> as Bishop Berkley's tar-water ended with the Trinity.<sup>5</sup> Two passages are very delightful. Mons. Girardin being a rigid classic, will tolerate nothing but Grecian temples and domes. Spires, those most graceful

1. Sarah Kemble (1755-1831), m. (1773) William Siddons. Her first appearance in London in the season of 1775-76 had been a failure, but on her return in October 1782 to play the title-rôle of Garrick's *Isabella* 'her merit . . . swallowed up all remembrance of present and past performers' (Thomas Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies*, 1785, iii. 263).

2. Among Mitford's extracts from Harcourt's letters to Mason is the following, undated: 'After this (praise of Mrs Siddons) account, you will guess, or rather you will be certain of Mr Walpole's opinion. He says there is nothing new or original in her' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 102).

3. *De la Composition des paysages, ou*

*des moyens d'embellir la nature autour des habitations, en joignant l'agréable à l'utile*, 1777, by René-Louis (1735-1808), Marquis de Girardin, Rousseau's intimate friend, on whose estate at Ermenonville Rousseau died and was buried. In 1794 the body was removed to the Panthéon in Paris, but the tomb on the 'île des Peupliers' at Ermenonville still stands.

4. The final chapter is entitled 'Des moyens de réunir l'agréable à l'utile, relativement à l'arrangement général des campagnes.'

5. In his *Siris: A Chain of Philosophical Reflections and Inquiries concerning the Virtues of Tar Water*, 1744.



and picturesque of all elevations, he proscribes as Gothic and barbarous, and thinks he has exploded them for ever by this Brobdignaggian puerility: *Ils assassinent les nuages*.<sup>6</sup>

His receipt for making rocks in your garden is not less admirable: 'Take a mountain, break it into pieces with a hammer, number the fragments and observe their antecedent positions: place them in their original order, cover the junctures with mould: plant ivy and grass and weeds, which will hide the fractures,'<sup>7</sup> and so you may have a cart-load of Snowdon or Penmenmaur in the middle of your bowling-green, and no soul will suspect that it did not grow there.

Like the Abbé de Lisle he is fond too of erecting cenotaphs to heroes and patriots,<sup>8</sup> which with the French rage [of] imitating whatever is the vogue of the hour would convert their enclosures into churchyards, and Vestris would have a statue as well as Turenne<sup>9</sup>—but we have no right to laugh at France; Vestris was a greater idol here than at Paris; Garrick's funeral was ten times more attended than Lord Chatham's, and Mrs Siddons has obliterated General Elliot:<sup>10</sup>

I nunc et nugas tecum meditare canoras!<sup>11</sup>

That is, you may play on your celestinette, mend our gardens or the constitution, and the first singer or dancer will efface all your vigils in a moment, as much as if you had endowed an hospital, for this is the land where all things are forgotten!

I have been two days labouring through this letter, and yet my

6. Girardin remarks that 'les formes bizarres et pointues' of Gothic towers 'semblent vouloir poignarder les nuages, dont ils attirent en effet la foudre' (op. cit. 110).

7. 'Pour rapporter un rocher, choisissez-en un dans la campagne de forme convenable à votre objet, faites le casser en plusieurs morceaux susceptibles d'être transportés; ayez soin auparavant de les faire exactement numérotés, ensuite vous rassembleriez les différents morceaux suivant l'ordre des numéros. Vous ferez couler du plâtre noir entre les joints, et pendant que le mortier est encore frais, vous jetterez sur toutes les parties des joints apparents du sable de la place même où a été pris le rocher; et vous recouvrirez ensuite avec des gazons de bruyère les plus grandes défectuosités qui

se trouveront dans le rapport des morceaux' (ibid. 57).

8. Ibid. 69–70. See Abbé Jacques Delille, *Les Jardins*, pp. 69–71, for his comments on cenotaphs.

9. Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne (1611–75), Vicomte de Turenne; general.

10. George Augustus Eliott (1717–90), K.B., 1783, cr. (1787) Bn Heathfield of Gibraltar; Maj.-Gen., 1759, Lt-Gen., 1765 (antedated to 1761), Gen., 1778; governor of Londonderry and Culmore 1774–5, of Gibraltar 1776–90; successful defender of Gibraltar during the siege of 1779–83.

11. 'Go now and muse over melodious trifles,' an adaptation of Horace, *Epistles* II. ii. 76.

lame awkwardness has made me blot it so that it is scarce legible; but I can do no better, adieu!

## TO MASON, Monday 10 February 1783

Printed from Mitford ii. 329-30.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 10, 1783.

I HAVE at last received your Fresnoy from Sir Joshua; you have made it a very handsome book,<sup>1</sup> and I am pleased that you have added Gray's 'Chronologic List.'<sup>2</sup> Sir Joshua has lately given me too his last *Discourse* to the Academy,<sup>3</sup> which I will tell you *entre nous*, is rather an apology for or an avowal of the object of his own style, that is, effect or impression on all sorts of spectators. This lesson will rather do hurt than good on his disciples, and make them neglect all kind of finishing.<sup>4</sup> Nor is he judicious in quoting Vandyck,<sup>5</sup> who at least specified<sup>6</sup> silks, satins, velvets.<sup>7</sup> Sir Joshua's draperies represent

1. HW made his copy even more so. It was sold London 1040 (removed from SH vii. 32), and sold in Part I of the Hoe Sale (Anderson Galleries, April 1911, lot 1176), where it is described as being in 'full green morocco with the arms of [HW] on both covers. . . . On the fly-leaf are written in Walpole's autograph four lines, commencing: "I never saw a translation that with so much poetry kept so close to the original as this," etc. (signed) Hor. Walpole, 1783. He has also inserted a view of Strawberry Hill (described in his autograph), his bookplate, and several portraits, including Dryden, Pope, and Gray, the latter being the scarce one engraved by Mason [? Carter], 1775.' Its present (1954) whereabouts is unknown.

2. 'Instead of the short account of the lives of the painters by Mr Graham, which has been annexed to the later editions of Mr Dryden's translation [of Dufresnoy], I have thought proper to insert, at the conclusion of this work, the following chronological list drawn up by the late Mr Gray, when in Italy, for his own use, and which I found fairly transcribed amongst those papers which his friendship bequeathed to me' (William Mason, *The Art of Painting of Charles Alphonse*

*du Fresnoy. Translated into English Verse . . . with Annotations by Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knt, 1783, p. [191]). This was the first appearance in print of Gray's Chronological List of Painters (C. S. Northup, *A Bibliography of Thomas Gray, 1917, p. 70).**

3. *A Discourse Delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy on the Distribution of the Prizes, December 10, 1782, by the President, 1783.* It does not appear in the SH library records.

4. The danger had not escaped Reynolds: 'I should be sorry, if what has been said should be understood to have any tendency to encourage that carelessness which leaves works in an unfinished state. I commend nothing for the want of exactness; I mean to point to that kind of exactness which is the best, and which is alone truly to be so esteemed' (ibid. 26).

5. HW uses 'quote' in the sense of 'cite.' Reynolds remarks that 'in the works of Vandyke we may observe that true mixture of softness and hardness perfectly observed' (ibid. 18).

6. 'Invested with a specific character' (OED).

7. 'Vandyck had a peculiar genius for portraits; his draperies are finished with

clothes, never their materials. Yet more; Vandyck and Sir Godfrey Kneller<sup>8</sup> excelled all painters in hands, Sir Joshua's are seldom even tolerably drawn. I saw t'other day one of, if not the best of his works, the portrait of Lord Richard Cavendish;<sup>9</sup> little is distinguished but the head and hand; yet the latter, though nearest to the spectator, is abominably bad; so are those of my three nieces,<sup>10</sup> and though the effect of the whole is charming, the details are slovenly, the faces only red and white; and his journeyman,<sup>11</sup> as if to distinguish himself, has finished the lock and key of the table like a Dutch flower-painter.

I observe that you say that in Pope's *Epistle to Jervas*, he changed *Wortley* for *Worseley* in later editions;<sup>12</sup> but surely it was *Worseley* in the earliest editions.<sup>13</sup> I did not know that it had ever been printed *Wortley*, being so possessed of its being *Worseley* that I did not perceive the change. Lady *Worseley*,<sup>14</sup> mother of Lady Carteret,<sup>15</sup> was a beauty and friend of Pope.<sup>16</sup>

Are you not concerned for the death of Brown?<sup>17</sup> I made a bad

a minuteness of truth not demanded in historic compositions' (*Anecdotes, Works* iii. 217). In a footnote HW calls attention to the finish of Van Dyck's satins.

8. Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723), Kt, 1691; cr. (1715) Bt.

9. Presumably either at Devonshire House or the Duke of Portland's (see *ante* 6 May 1781).

10. The Waldegraves: see *ante* 28 May 1780.

11. Probably Giuseppe Filippo Liberati Marchi (ca 1735-1808), Reynolds's chief assistant.

12. Mason printed Pope's *Epistle to Mr Jervas* as an appendix to his translation of Dufresnoy, and in a footnote to l. 60 of that poem, 'And other beauties envy Wortley's eyes,' wrote: 'In one of Dr Warburton's editions of Pope, by which copy this has been corrected, the name is changed to *Worsley*. If that reading be not an error of the press, I suppose the poet altered the name after he had quarrelled with Lady M. W. Montague, and, being offended at her wit, thus revenged himself on her beauty' (*The Art of Painting*, p. 187).

13. HW was wrong; see *post* 5 March 1783.

14. Frances Thynne (ca 1673-1750), dau. of Thomas, 1st Vct Weymouth, m. (1690) Sir Robert Worsley, 4th Bt.

15. Frances Worsley (1694-1743), m. (1710) John Carteret, 2d Bn Carteret, 1695, 2d E. Granville, 1744.

16. Possibly, for she was a friend and correspondent of Swift, but there is no evidence of particular friendship with Pope. In his copy of Pope's *Works*, 1743 (now wsl), ii. 131, HW has annotated line 60 of the *Epistle to Mr Jervas*, 'Frances daughter of Lord Weymouth and wife of Sir Robert Worsley: mother of Lady Carteret.' For a note on *Jervas* see following letter.

17. Lancelot ('Capability') Brown died 6 Feb. 1783 (*London Chronicle* 6-8 Feb., liii. 133). HW wrote in his pocket notebook 1780-3 (now wsl), 'Lancelot Brown, gardenist, died Feb. 6, 1783, at his son-in-law Holland's door in Hertford Street, aged 67, of an asthma. He coined the word capability. Said of water at Blenheim, the Thames will never forgive me this. . . . Much at Nuneham, where too altered house' (*A Note Book of Horace Walpole*, ed. W. S. Lewis, New York, 1927, pp. 29-30).

epitaph for him, which if you please you may recolour<sup>18</sup> with any tints that remain on your pallet with which you repainted Fresnoy: here it is.

With one lost Paradise the name  
Of our first ancestor is stained;  
Brown shall enjoy unsullied fame  
For many a Paradise regained.

I have a mind, should you approve it, to call designers of gardens, *gardenists*,<sup>19</sup> to distinguish them from *gardeners*: or *landscapists*. I wish you would coin a term for the art itself.

I have heard nothing of Cumberland's pedestrian tragedy,<sup>20</sup> but that all the men laughed at, all the women cried at it. I know no more literary news, and I have done with all other. Adieu!

From MASON, Wednesday 5 March 1783

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WORKSOP 7 MR.

York [Aston], March 5, 1783.<sup>1</sup>

NOW that chaos has come again<sup>1a</sup> I hold myself absolved from every obligation. I shall therefore scorn to make any apology to you for my late silence. I have found myself better employment than

18. Mason composed an epitaph for Brown, but it bears no relation to HW's. See *post* 8 Nov. 1783, n. 15.

19. 'The designer of modern improvements in *landscape-gardens* (as I will call them for want of a happier appellation) ought by no means to be confounded with the domestic called a *gardener*; especially as a word presents itself which will distinguish the different provinces of designing a garden, and of superintending it when laid out. The latter will remain the *gardener*, the projector I should propose to denominate a *gardenist*' (*Anecdotes, Works* iii. 438 n.). This note appeared for the first time in the 1786 edition of *Anecdotes*, iv. 106 (cf. *oed*, which calls it a nonce-word and gives this example only). HW did not use the word in his *Modern*

*Gardening*, and his suggestion that Nivernais use the French equivalent, *jardiniste*, in his translation, was not adopted (HW to Nivernais 6 Jan. 1785; Isabel W. U. Chase, *Horace Walpole: Gardenist*, Princeton, 1943, p. xxiii).

20. *The Mystrious Husband*, first acted at Covent Garden 28 Jan. 1783 and presented 'about 13 times' (Genest vi. 268-70). The plot owed much to HW's *Mystrious Mother*. It is discussed by Stanley T. Williams in his *Richard Cumberland: His Life and Dramatic Works*, New Haven, 1917, pp. 193-6.

1. Date-line added by HW. Mason had left York in February (*post* 4 May 1783).

1a. *Othello* III. iii. 92. The recent coalition of Fox and North had brought about

that of writing either to you or any of my former friends. I have gone a great way towards a literary coalition with Dr Johnson. Our object is no less than the complete administration of the Blue-Stocking Club which we mean to govern in a truly constitutional way without any concurrence from Madam Montagu. All our arrangements are not finally settled. Cumberland will not come into our plan unless I give him my word and honour that I will write prologues to all the plays he has now on the stocks, or shall have on the stocks. Hard terms as these are, I believe I shall have public spirit enough to accede to them. I never saw a man so placable and even reasonable as Johnson himself. He is willing to own Gray's odes tolerable, provided I will not insist on his liking blank verse. And as we are both agreed in thinking Macferson the forger of Ossian, we have already decided that he shall be expelled the club. Mrs Montagu however is still so obstinate that she holds her feast of shells<sup>2</sup> in her feather dressing-room.<sup>3</sup> She will however certainly in due time be forced to submit to our terms. Soame Jennyns has absolutely refused to take the lead in her *conversazioni*, pleading age and infirmities and the lack of his former volatile spirits. Smelt has been sent for from the banks of the Swale,<sup>4</sup> but he declares he has done both with the courtly and witty world. In short, if we only can keep together we shall carry our point hollow. I am so clear in this that I think I can safely offer you the place of Epigrammatist-General if you will accept of it, but any other that you are less fit for would suit our administration better. You must, however, be sure to follow our leading principle which is that when you have read the worst poem that ever was written you must immediately make the author of it your bosom friend, and declare that it is not writings but writers,<sup>5</sup> that you hold in estimation. Pray give me your sentiments upon this point immediately, for we shall be in power incontinently.

the fall of Shelburne's ministry (24 Feb. 1783). It was as unexpected as would have been the coalition Mason describes here.

2. An Ossianism for a ceremonial feast, described in *Fingal*, Bk iii (James Macpherson, *Poems of Ossian*, ed. George Eyre-Todd, 1888, p. 198; N&Q 1914, 11th ser., ix. 108, 175, and 455). Mrs Montagu started giving such feasts, in which toasts were drunk from shells, in 1761, and they continued in fashion among the blue-stockings for many years (Emily J. Climen-son, *Elizabeth Montagu*, 1906, ii. 267-8).

3. A large room decorated with feather-hangings, collected by Mrs Montagu and her friends over a period of many years. The furnishing of the room was not completed until 1791. See HW to Mary Berry 14 June 1791, BERRY i. 290 and n. 6.

4. Leonard Smelt's house was in Mason's parish of Langton-upon-Swale (*Vict. Co. Hist. Yorks, North Riding* i. 185; GM 1800, lxx pt ii. 908; ante 26 Oct. 1777, n. 3).

5. A thrust at the Cavendish faction's policy of men rather than measures.

With these great ideas in my head, you cannot wonder that I am careless as to any news you can send me, besides I know you can tell me no more than Tonton could of what is going forward at St James's. You laid aside your political correspondence with me in the very nick of time, for I should have defied you to have carried it on to the present moment. You are tolerably good at description. But Milton failed when he attempted to describe the limbo of vanity<sup>6</sup>—were you to write to me now you must describe the limbo of incoherency, which I look upon as a much harder task. Let us talk of something within the sphere of common sense. My edition of Fresnoy, that is, Graham's printed 1716,<sup>7</sup> in the *Epistle to Jervas* reads *Wortley* and this is the second edition; undoubtedly it was so in the first, but on second thoughts this is the first in which that *Epistle* was printed. Dryden's own in quarto only preceded it. I wish I had mentioned this to you before I printed my note that I might have added to it your notices about <Lady> Worsley.<sup>8</sup> I wish too I had referred my reader to you<r account> of Jervas to authorize what I had said of him,<sup>9</sup> <for> all readers do not know that he was a bad painter. I like your epigram on poor Brown much, and your new invented term of gardenists. I

6. *Paradise Lost* iii. 444-97.

7. Mason refers to the 1716 edition of Dryden's translation of *The Art of Painting*. A 'Short Account of the Most Eminent Painters both Ancient and Modern' was printed with this, as it was with the first edition of Dryden's work (1695). The author of the 'Short Account,' identified by his initials in the second edition, was Richard Graham (fl. 1680-1720), an acquaintance of George Vertue and contributor to his notes. There is no evidence that Graham superintended the publication of the second edition of *The Art of Painting*. It seems to have been revised and prepared for the press by Jervas and Pope (Hugh Macdonald, *John Dryden: A Bibliography of Early Editions and of Drydeniana*, Oxford, 1939, pp. 175-6).

8. The bracketed portions were lost when the seal was broken.

9. In his prefatory 'Epistle to Sir Joshua Reynolds' Mason had written:

'How oft, on that fair shrine [Friendship's] when poets bind  
The flowers of song, does partial passion blind

Their judgment's eye! How oft does Truth  
disclaim  
The deed, and scorn to call it genuine  
Fame!  
How did she here, when Jervas was the  
theme,  
Waft through the ivory gate the poet's  
dream!

\* \* \* \* \*

But what, if Fashion tempted Pope  
astray?  
The witch has spells, and Jervas knew a  
day  
When mode-struck belles and beaux were  
proud to come  
And buy of him a thousand years of  
bloom'

(*The Art of Painting*, pp. vi-vii).  
Charles Jervas (ca 1675-1739), portrait-painter and translator of *Don Quixote*, the subject of Pope's eulogistic 'Epistle,' had been Pope's instructor in painting. HW described his productions as 'wretched daubings' (*Anecdotes, Works* iii. 410).

wish I and my commentator had been possessed of it before my last edition was published, for published I suppose it now is, as it was printed off three weeks ago. But if you would see it, you must buy it, for of it I make no presents, looking upon it as a second edition.<sup>10</sup> Pray give me a line to assure me of your health. I inquire not after that of my country.

Yours, etc.,

W. MASON

To MASON, Friday 7 March 1783

Printed from Mitford ii. 330-2, where it is mistakenly appended to *ante* 10 Feb. 1783.

March 7, 1783.

YOUR coalition with Johnson is super-excellent, yet have I lived so long and seen so many strange evolutions, that do you know, I should not be quite surprised, if it were a reality and not a parody. Chaos is in good earnest come again, and were not the nation at once so dissipated and so detached from all esteem for persons, which it is impossible to feel, I should expect very serious consequences. But as in the primitive chaos though all the elements were at strife, we are not told of any bloodshed, that neither the fire was drowned, nor the water boiled over, I conclude the present confusion will subside in a new *Creation*,<sup>1</sup> that the devil will steal into Paradise, that the new couple will be driven out of it again after they have filled their bellies, and that things will go on as they were in the beginning, are now, and shall be forevermore. Such being my idea of politics, I should if I had not as you know already bidden adieu to them, take a still more solemn leave of them now. I am willing to die with what little honesty and consistency I have. How that would be possible I do not see when all principles are confounded. One cannot be of a party by one's self, and where is that one to which I would say I appertain? To none, absolutely to none. Nor would that be the strongest

10. This first collected edition of the four books of *The English Garden* was published about the beginning of March 1783 (Gaskell 33).

1. HW expected that the King would use his power to bestow peerages to gain support against the coalition of North and Fox (*Last Journals* ii. 491-2).

objection. To stand single may be the honestest part, but then it must be a negative one. What can an insulated man do? no good—if connected, I fear (as my conscience is a little timid) he may do more harm than good. In short the more I reflect the less am I satisfied with the profession of politician, and therefore my remnant shall not be discoloured with it. Personal interests or personal passions will creep into the paste, and perhaps leaven the whole lump. I wash my hands of it.

I have not seen the new edition of your *Garden* advertised, or should certainly have sent for it. I do want you to give me three or four impressions of your own head and of Gray's (I mean of the small quartos).<sup>2</sup> You know the principal occupation of my dotage is *making books*, that is dressing them up with prints and pretty bindings, a charming amusement for a superannuated child and which neither hurts the eyes nor employs the head; your Fresnoy is to be decorated proudly.<sup>3</sup> Thus I have answered your kind question and told you that I am very well, in short a very fine boy of my age, though I have neither cut any teeth, nor lost any; my hand too though very rickety, you see can walk alone again. Adieu.

Yours entirely,

H. WALPOLE

From MASON, Sunday 4 May 1783

Printed from MS now wsl.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: WORKSOP 6 MA.

Aston, May 4th 1783.

WHAT can a man write about in these days! these chaotic days! Was I to write in my last vein and tell you that my friend Lexiphanes<sup>1</sup> and I had been employed in raising a loan<sup>2</sup> to finish

2. Probably Charles Carter's engraving ( $5\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$  inches) of the portrait of Mason by Lewis Vaslet (1771), and Carter's engraving ( $5\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the portrait of Gray by Mason and Benjamin Wilson (*BM Cat. of Engraved British Portraits* iii. 204; *ante* 16 July 1773 and n. 13; information from Mr William A. Jackson).

3. See *ante* 10 Feb. 1783, n. 1.

1. Johnson, so-called in Archibald Campbell's satire of that name (1767).

2. Lord John Cavendish, chancellor of the Exchequer in the new ministry nominally headed by the Duke of Portland, had negotiated a loan on terms very un-



Madam Montagu's feather dressing-room and that we had paid the price of ostrich feathers for goose quills, you would hardly take it for an excuse, and think me as tedious as I suppose the dramatized *Tristram Shandy*<sup>3</sup> may be. Therefore I will only beg your pardon for not writing \*sooner, and for not sending\*<sup>4</sup> (what indeed I have not) the impressions you desired of the etching of my noble self. I have indeed a few of the two plates of Mr Gray,<sup>5</sup> and had anybody gone from this part of the world to town you would have had them ere this, but they shall be sent the first opportunity. In the mean time I have written to Mr Stonhewer to tell him that Carter, my former servant (who I fear is now half starving in town) has the plate of my head, and to bid him bring a few copies to you. He is a good copyist in oil and if you could recommend him to anybody who wants a picture cheaply and faithfully copied, he would answer their purpose and be an act of charity.<sup>6</sup>

If you wish to know anything of my present occupations, intentions, etc., etc., I refer you to either Lord Harcourt<sup>7</sup> or Mr Stonhewer. The history of myself is not worth writing twice over or reading once over, and yet I have the vanity to think it a better history than the Parliamentary History would be of precisely the same era, I mean from the time that I left York in February to the present moment.

I find on looking over what I have scribbled that where the marginal\* is I have written something very like Irish. You may make a present of the sentence if you please to my Lord Northington,<sup>8</sup> it may be of service to him.

I rejoice that your rickety hand is able to walk alone; if it would

favourable to the government, and was severely attacked in the debates on the budget (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 767-95 and 808-26).

3. First acted at Covent Garden 26 April 1783 and performed 'about 6 times' (Genest vi. 273-4). Its author was Leonard MacNally (1752-1820), Irish playwright and, later, political informer against the Irish revolutionaries. Of his *Tristram Shandy* Genest remarked that 'MacNally has not been very happy in this attempt to dramatize Sterne' (ibid.).

4. Mason explains these asterisks below.

5. Probably the engravings by Carter and by Basire. See *ante* 16 July 1773 and n. 13, and 7 March 1783 and n. 2.

6. Mason first wrote 'it would answer.'

7. Mason's letter written this same day

to Harcourt, addressed to 'Harcourt House, London,' is in the possession of Lord Harcourt. It contains some jocular political observations, but says little of Mason's doings except that he is studying hydraulics to learn how to draw water up to his church steeple. He asks Harcourt to get him a certain French pamphlet on the subject, and begs him not to 'turn up your nose and say, "He is always employing himself about what anybody would do better."'

8. Robert Henley (1747-86), styled Lord Henley 1764-72, 2d E. of Northington, 1772, had recently been appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. HW thought him 'a man very unequal to the task' (*Last Journals* ii. 514).

now and then visit the most undeserving of its correspondents it might employ itself very well, till you are in a habit of visiting the purchaser of Mr Prado's villa.<sup>9</sup> Pray tell me if it be really true that Barry<sup>10</sup> the painter has put me in Elysium.<sup>11</sup> The papers have made me very vain with the thought.

Addio.

### TO MASON, Monday 5 May 1783

Printed for the first time from MS now WSL; incomplete and unsent, because, HW says in the following letter, it was almost all about himself. Probably on re-reading it he found it too self-pitying. The MS was apparently among those sold by the 5th D. of Grafton, grandson of James, 2d E. Waldegrave, to Richard Bentley the publisher; bought by WSL, 1937, from the estate of Richard Bentley the younger.

*Endorsed* (probably by Mary Berry): A letter to whom I don't now know.

Strawberry Hill, May 5th, 1783.

**I** DON'T know whether you care a farthing for hearing from me since I have forsworn politics. By your silence I should suppose not: yet, as I am not equally indifferent, the correspondence shall not drop by my fault. I will remind you at decent intervals, that you have still an old friend in a village on the banks of the Thames. You probably will not have that encumbrance on your memory long; nor can I awaken it by any pleasing or novel ideas. I have nothing worth telling you; and therefore if you think my letter not deserving an answer, I have no right to say it does.

That silly fellow Nichols<sup>1</sup> the printer, who, between a furor of

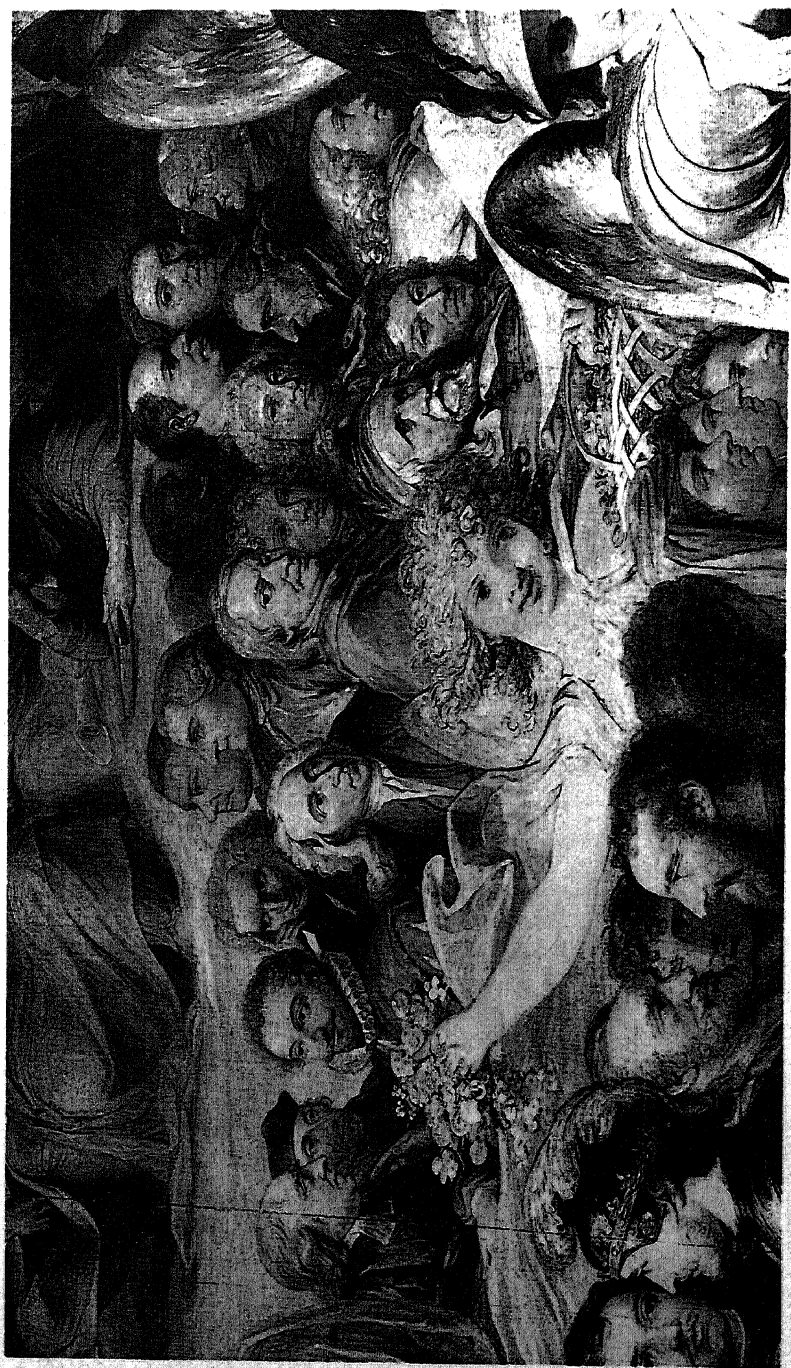
9. Abraham Prado (d. 1782), HW's neighbour; an amateur horticulturist of considerable note (GM 1782, lii. 406; COLE ii. 373 n. 25; HW to Lady Ossory 14 Sept. 1774). The purchaser of his villa may have been a Mr Lucas, who owned it at some time after Prado's death. It was demolished ca 1817 (R. S. Cobbett, *Memoirs of Twickenham*, 1872, p. 339).

10. James Barry (1741-1806), R.A. 1773-99, professor of painting to the Royal Academy, 1782-99, had executed a series of six large pictures for the walls of the new room of the Society of Arts in the Adelphi. The public exhibition of the pic-

tures had opened 28 April 1783 (*Daily Advertiser* 28 April).

11. 'Elysium, or the State of Final Retribution' is the title of the sixth picture of Barry's series. A description of the pictures was printed in the *London Chronicle* 29 April-1 May 1783, liii. 413. Mason appears in 'Elysium' (see following letter *ad fin.* and illustration).

1. Other references to Nichols in the correspondence show no such vehement feelings on HW's part; no explanation of this outburst has been found.



MASON AND GRAY IN JAMES BARRY'S 'ELYSIUM'



scribbling and a furor of getting money, vomits out volumes upon volumes filled with as insignificant rubbish as a scavenger gathers in his cart, has just published two octavos of Atterburyana<sup>2</sup> in humble imitation of his prototype Curl,<sup>3</sup> who he gravely says in his preface *has been transmitted* (he should have said, through the pillory<sup>4</sup>) *to posterity with an obloquy he ill deserved*—can one help laughing at this apostle's sympathy for the martyr his master?—*whatever were his demerits*, adds this yet unpelted disciple, *they were amply atoned for by his indefatigable industry in preserving our national remains*—so does a scavenger—*nor did he publish a single volume, but what amidst a profusion of baser metal contained some precious ore*<sup>5</sup>—a gold finder again! There is little curious that is new in these volumes; but though there seems to be some lingering propensities in Nichols to his old principles of Jacobitism and high church, imbibed from the non-juring Bowyer<sup>6</sup> his predecessor, his impartial rage for venting all he can collect, to his purpose or against it, has faithfully exhibited too all existent testimonies of Atterbury's turbulence and factious ambition, particularly a letter from his father<sup>7</sup> remonstrating early on that restless spirit.<sup>8</sup>

Nichols with the same revivifying communicativeness reprints the prelate's correspondence with the Pretender and his agents,<sup>9</sup> after his exile,<sup>10</sup> which was first made public by Sir David Dalrymple,<sup>11</sup> and

2. Publication of the first two volumes of *The Epistolary Correspondence, Visitation Charges, Speeches, and Miscellanies of the Right Rev. Francis Atterbury, D.D., Lord Bishop of Rochester* was announced in the *London Chronicle* 29 April–1 May 1783, liii. 411; a third volume appeared in 1784. HW's copies of the three volumes are now WSL; the first two have numerous marginalia.

3. Edmund Curl (1675–1747), bookseller and editor, notorious foe of Pope, published in 1727 *Atterburyana, Being Miscellanies by the Late Bishop of Rochester*.

4. Curl was sentenced to stand for an hour in the pillory at Charing Cross 23 Feb. 1728 for publishing without authorization *The Memoirs of John Ker of Kersland* (Ralph Straus, *The Unspeakable Curl*, 1927, pp. 98–121).

5. *Epistolary Correspondence*, i. pp. iv–v. HW has pencilled an exclamation point below the passage.

6. William Bowyer (1699–1777) the

younger, of whom Nichols was partner, successor, and biographer.

7. Lewis Atterbury (ca 1631–93), D.D.; rector of Middleton Keynes, Bucks (Foster, *Alumni Oxon.*).

8. 'I know not what to think of your uneasiness. It shows unlike a Christian, and savours neither of temper nor consideration. I am troubled to remember it is habitual' (letter of 1 Nov. 1690 in *Epistolary Correspondence*, i. 11).

9. *Ibid* i. 148–65.

10. Atterbury in 1723 went into permanent exile because of his Jacobite sentiments.

11. Sir David Dalrymple (1726–92), lord of session as Lord Hailes, 1766, published *The Private Correspondence of Dr Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, and His Friends in 1725, Edinburgh, 1768*. Nichols acknowledged this source (*Epistolary Correspondence*, i. 148–9). These letters were apparently offered to HW by Dalrymple in 1764 for publication at the SH Press. See HW to Dalrymple 23 Feb. 1764 and 2

which give the lie to all defences of him. Indeed I myself saw sufficient evidence of his connection with that party. Father Gordon,<sup>12</sup> when he showed me the library of the Scotch College at Paris,<sup>13</sup> pointed to a trunk in which were deposited Atterbury's papers.

One remarkable letter there is, in which the Bishop reproaches Mr Boyle with having planned and assisted him in the controversy with Bentley.<sup>14</sup>

In this new repository of obsolete squabbles, Nichols, who makes everything relate to everything, if they do but begin with the same letter, as 'I love my love with an A, because,' etc., has reprinted a defence of Sergeant Wynne<sup>15</sup> against what I had said of him in the life of the Duke of Wharton in my *Noble Authors*<sup>16</sup>—yet the fact probably was true. I had it from Cæsar Ward,<sup>17</sup> editor of the Parlia-

Feb. 1768 (DALRYMPLE 98 and nn. 31-2, and 118 n. 2).

12. Rev. John Gordon (d. 1777), principal of the Scots College, Paris, 1752-77 (J. F. S. Gordon, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle for Scotland*, Glasgow, 1867, iv. 249).

13. A college affiliated with the University of Paris and designed for the education of Scottish aspirants to the Roman Catholic priesthood (DALRYMPLE 107 nn. 5-6; Violette M. Montagu, 'The Scottish College in Paris,' *The Scottish Historical Review*, 1906-7, iv. 399-416; Peter F. Anson, *The Catholic Church in Modern Scotland*, 1937, pp. 154-5). HW saw the treasures of the Scots College on 15 March 1766 (DU DEFFAND v. 307 and 358-9). The archives were destroyed during the French Revolution (Francisque Michel, *Les Écos-sais en France, les Français en Écosse*, 1862, ii. 329-30).

14. An episode in the 'Battle of the Books,' the scholars' quarrel over the relative merits of the ancients and the moderns, satirized by Swift. The Hon. Charles Boyle (1674-1731), 4th E. of Orrery, 1703, contributed to the controversy *Dr Bentley's Dissertations on the Epistles of Phalaris and the Fables of Æsop Examined*, 1698. In the letter referred to by HW, Atterbury wrote to Boyle: 'In laying the design of the book, in writing above half of it, in reviewing a good part of the rest, in transcribing the whole, and attending the press, half a year of my life went away. . . . However . . . since you came to

England, no one expression that I know of, has dropped from you that could give me reason to believe you had any opinion of what I had done, or even took it kindly from me. Hitherto, Sir, I have endeavoured to serve your reputation, without your thanks, and against your will. But it does not become me always to do it' (*Epistolary Correspondence*, ii. 21-2).

15. William Wynne (1692-1765), barrister of the Middle Temple; serjeant-at-law, 1736. The defence was written by Wynne himself and was first printed in the *Critical Review* May 1759, vii. 453-7. See 'Short Notes,' GRAY i. 32 and nn. 217-9.

16. HW accused Wynne of plagiarizing from Bishop Atterbury when Wynne was Atterbury's counsel in his trial before the House of Lords in 1723. HW's account of the incident is in ii. 133 of the 1759 edition of *Royal and Noble Authors*. It was removed from the 1770 printing of HW's *Works* and does not appear in the 1798 *Works*. It is included, however, in all the separate editions of *Royal and Noble Authors*. In the 1806 edition, edited by Thomas Park, HW's statement, though retained, is contradicted by the editor.

17. Cæsar Ward (ca 1711-59), bookseller in (at various times) London, Scarborough, and York. For an account of him see Davies, *York Press* 242-60. Of Ward's correspondence with HW, only one letter has been found, Ward to HW 7 June 1758.

mentary history;<sup>18</sup> and on its being denied, it was confirmed to me by Mr Bap. Leveson-Gower,<sup>19</sup> who lived at the time and remembered it, and had been for the greatest part of his life thoroughly leagued with all Atterbury's friends. Yet though I adhered to the fact, which I could not disavow as I believed it, I would not produce my new authority, as I was sorry to have mentioned it since it hurt the family (a tenderness of which I have given repeated proofs) and therefore left them the satisfaction of contradicting me unmolested. I suppose this resurrection of an insignificant tale will be transcribed into the newspapers—and so it may, unmolested for me. Too little of life remains to be wasted on those most foolish of all squabbles, literary, which like water-balloons<sup>20</sup> hop, hiss, hop up again once or twice at intervals, stink and perish forever. I have done with the world—and were it to begin again, the last vocation I would embrace, should be that of author. My veneration for true genius is profound; my indifference to a mediocrity of fame, which at most can fall to my lot, total; my contempt for the fry of Grub Street, supreme. After a century or two (what a fleet moment in the succession of ages!) both the latter classes, must or ought to vanish. Nay, should their works exist, who (considering how they increase yearly, monthly, weekly) can have time to dip into a page of an hundred thousandth part of the books that invade the world? Do not authors in this country, in France, Germany and Italy, advance in torrents like the swarms of Vandals formerly from the North? Attila, and Alaric and Genseric, Shakespeare and Milton and Dryden and Gray and you, will be remembered; but who knows even the names of the private soldiers that formed those hosts which deluged Europe?

In another light I smile at Nichols's position of *preserving our national remains*. Ten years ago that had been a laudable object—but where are the *national remains* of Carthage? Who inquires after the relics of a country that is sunk, annihilated? If it had once car-

18. *The History and Proceedings of the House of Commons from the Restoration to the Present Time*, 14 vols, 1742–44. The editor was not Ward, but his business partner, Richard Chandler (d. 1744). The reception of the work was not up to Chandler's expectations; its failure was followed by his suicide, and Ward was forced into bankruptcy in 1745 (Davies, *York Press* 246–8).

19. Baptist Leveson-Gower (ca 1704–82), son of John, Lord Gower; M.P. Newcastle-under-Lyme 1727–61; commissioner of trade 1745–9 (Venn, *Alumni Cantab.*).

20. A kind of odoriferous firework. Various ways of making them are described in Robert Jones's *Artificial Fireworks*, 1776, pp. 86–8.

ried its arms, and arts and talents to the height, some pious traveller perhaps will dig amidst the ruins of a fallen temple, and exult fervently if he finds a mutilated bust of Epaminondas, Demosthenes or Pindar—nay, it may be that he will transport home some Arundelian marbles<sup>21</sup> that record the private heroes who fell at Thermopylæ—but alas! what are those names more than such initials as bumpkins engrave on the leads of a church? Those bumpkins mean to be immortal—and not more irrationally than a thousand such authors as I.

Oh! but we have a more exalted endower of a fund of national fame than poor Nichols. Barry the painter has erected a new temple of fame, and distributed seats in it *de par lui-même*. I assure you, you are registered amongst his worthies—indeed in company with some whose names I never heard before:<sup>22</sup> but with some you are well acquainted—for instance, Dr Johnson, Soame Jenyns, and Burke.<sup>23</sup> This is like Queen Caroline's joining Clarke and Wollaston with Newton and Locke.<sup>24</sup> But of all delightful whims that ever entered into a distempered brain, is the following. Dr Johnson, as usher of the Graces, is introducing the Duchesses of Devonshire and Rutland to Mrs Montagu, as the Goddess of Wisdom, under whose tuition they are to place themselves.<sup>25</sup>—What would one not give to see the scene realized! I have not yet been at that marvelous exhibition, but promise myself special entertainment. The Royal one at Somerset House is mediocrity itself.<sup>26</sup> Sir Joshua seems fallen off since his paralytic stroke;<sup>27</sup> and . . .<sup>28</sup>

21. Thomas Howard (1585–1646), 14th E. of Arundel, 'father of virtue in England,' who left a notable collection of books, paintings, statuary, and gems. His statues and inscribed marbles were presented in 1667 to Oxford by the Earl's grandson, Henry Howard, 6th D. of Norfolk. They are now in the Ashmolean.

22. Barry has identified the figures in his *Account of a Series of Pictures, in the Great Room of the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, at the Adelphi*, 1783. The murals are still in the large hall of the Royal Society of Arts in John Street.

23. These figures appear in the fifth picture of the series, 'The Distribution of Premiums in the Society of Arts, etc.' (Barry, op. cit. in his *Works*, 1809, ii. 339–40).

24. These are four of the five busts set up by Queen Caroline in 1732 in her 'Hermitage' at Richmond Park, described *ante* 19 May 1780, n. 18. Samuel Clarke (1675–1729) and William Wollaston (1660–1724) are among the divines and philosophers.

25. Also in the fifth picture (Barry, *Works*, ii. 339).

26. The annual exhibition of the Royal Academy opened on Monday 28 April 1783 (*London Chronicle* 26–9 April, liii. 407). A somewhat more favourable account of the exhibition is given in C. R. Leslie and Tom Taylor, *Life and Times of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1865, ii. 408.

27. Reynolds was stricken in November 1782 (*ibid.* ii. 379–80). In his catalogue of the exhibition HW wrote 'Poor Sir Joshua seems to decline since his illness' opposite



## TO MASON, Wednesday 7 May 1783

Printed from Mitford ii. 337-9.

Berkeley Square, May 7, 1783.

IF I could tell you *what a man might write about in these chaotic days*,<sup>1</sup> I should have written to you oftener myself, but the chaos that began about this time twelvemonth disgusted me so much, as it defeated all the prospects which I had hoped though never expected to see realized, that I firmly determined to bid adieu to politics; and as nothing else worth repeating does happen, I imitated your indolence, and consequently was kind to your conscience, which must now and then reproach itself with its remissness. I did indeed a few days ago begin a letter to you, but as I perceived it was almost all about myself, I left it unfinished at Strawberry, and now on the encouragement of your letter, I shall send you this instead of it, and never finish that. Nay, another of your questions which I can answer gives me occasion to repeat the only thing in that letter which was worth your knowing. Yes, I had told you that Barry has apotheosized you—ay, and in full chorus with your beatified friends, Dr Johnson, Soame Jenyns, Burke and Mrs Montagu, and with some who may be your friends too, but whose names I never heard before, nor remember now. There are two gentlewomen too, who I believe will stare as much as you at the company in which they find themselves. Had they been hurried into Charon's hoy at once, they could not be more surprised at the higgledy-piggledyhood that they would meet there. In short these two poor gentlewomen are the Duchesses of Devonshire and Rutland, who this new master of the ceremonies to Queen Fame has ordered that well-bred usher to the Graces, Dr Johnson, to present to Mrs Vicequeen Montagu, under whose tuition they are to be placed, who is recommended to them as a model to copy. This vision of immortality I have not yet seen, but I am dabbling

Reynolds's portrait of the Brummell children, No. 148 (William T. Whitley, *Artists and Their Friends in England, 1700-1799*, 1928, i. 395). HW wrote 'good' after three other portraits by Reynolds in the same exhibition (Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts*, 1905-6, vi. 274).

28. Here the letter breaks off in the middle of a line. See following letter.

1. An echo of the opening of Mason's letter *ante* 4 May.

my eyes with euphrasy and rue,<sup>2</sup> and propose to treat them with it tomorrow. I must astringe my mouth too with alum, lest I laugh and be put into purgatory again myself, as I was for the same crime when I first saw Barry's Homeric Venus<sup>3</sup> standing start<sup>4</sup> naked in front, and dragging herself up to heaven by a pyramid of her own red hair. I had never seen nor heard of the man, and unfortunately he stood at my elbow.<sup>5</sup> To punish me for that unwitting crime, he clapped me into his book on painting as an admirer of the Dutch school,<sup>6</sup> which others have blamed me for undervaluing.<sup>7</sup> I suppose he concluded that if I laughed at bombast-frenzy, I must dote on the lowest buffoonery.

I shall be glad to learn from Lord Harcourt or Mr Stonhewer your future plans or motions, though I probably shall not be much benefited by them. I think you would have told me, if seeing me fell within your design. The less time I have left, the more I wish to pass it with those I love, but fortune must produce that advantage if I receive it. I cannot expect that it should influence others. The summer, when I could best enjoy their company, separates me almost entirely from my friends, and I have not youth or activity enough to follow them; so that in effect the gout or its consequences tyrannizes my whole year. But I do not complain; could one arrange one's scheme of life to one's wish, it would be but more painful to part with it; age and its attendant or concomitant deprivations reconcile one to laying down its burthen. Long life is doomed to the loss of those we love, their absence therefore appears a light evil in comparison.

If Carter of who[m] I have heard nothing should call on me and

2. 'Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed

Which that false fruit that promised clearer sight

Had bred; then purged with euphrasy and rue

The visual nerve, for he had much to see'

(*Paradise Lost* xi. 412-5).

3. 'Venus Rising from the Sea,' exhibited by Barry at the Royal Academy in 1772 (Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts*, 1905-6, i. 132).

4. OED calls this form obsolete (except dialectal) since the 14th century.

5. The same story in more detail is told in *Walpoliana* ii. 91-2 and mentioned

in HW to Lady Ossory 1 Feb. 1775 and to Cole 5 Feb. 1780 (Cole ii. 189).

6. 'As to the Dutch taste, I shall leave it to the deep researches of the Hon. Horace Walpole, or to any other learned gentleman (if such another can be found) who may happen to have a gusto for this kind of art' (*Inquiry into the Real and Imaginary Obstructions to the Acquisition of the Arts in England*, first published in 1775, in Barry's *Works*, 1809, ii. 205). A MS 'Reply to James Barry' by HW, written ca 1775, is now WSL.

7. In the preface to the *Ædes Walpolianæ* HW had spoken of Dutch painters as 'those drudging mimics of nature's most uncomely coarsenesses' (*Works* ii. 226-7).

I could recommend him,<sup>8</sup> I would willingly. It is not very likely I should have an opportunity. The town is overrun with painters, as much as with disbanded soldiers, sailors and ministers, and I doubt half of all four classes must be hanged for robbing on the highway, before the rest can get bread, or anybody else eat theirs in quiet. I shall heartily pity three of the denominations—for the fourth,<sup>9</sup> compassion itself cannot make an option between the hangers and hangees; who can care whether a Lord Ad[vocate] or a Sir F. or T.R.<sup>10</sup> is the culprit or the executioner? Don't wonder I have done with politics, when there has been such crossing over and figuring in, that I defy prejudice itself to hold the scales with a partial hand in favour of any faction.

### TO MASON, Sunday 11 May 1783

Printed from Mitford ii. 340-2.

Strawberry Hill, May 11, 1783.

THIS is only a codicil to my last, and shall not be longer than my testament. I have seen Lord Harcourt; he says you will not come till the Parliament rises.<sup>1</sup> Were you a member of Parliament I should think you exceedingly in the right: not being so, excuse me, if I do not comprehend your reason, not that I contest it with you, for were I to convince you I should not think myself a jot nearer to persuading you.

My other reason for writing now is to do justice to your St Peter who has let you into heaven. I mean Barry the painter. I have seen his exhibition, and am much pleased with one of his eight pictures,<sup>2</sup> and that one is one of the two largest,<sup>3</sup> it is the 'Olympic Victors

8. As Mason had requested *ante* 4 May 1783.

9. I.e., the ministers.

10. *Sic* in Mitford (followed by Cunningham and Toynbee), but 'F. or T.' is probably Mitford's unanswered query to himself as to which initial HW wrote. HW is clearly referring to Sir Thomas Rumbold, whose finances were the subject of a long and ineffectual Parliamentary inquiry. On 2 May 1783 the Lord Advocate, Henry Dundas, complained 'of the very

thin attendance that he had hitherto found, whenever the bill of pains and penalties against Sir Thomas Rumbold became the subject of discussion' (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 805).

1. This took place on 16 July 1783 (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiii. 1122). Mason came south earlier; see following letters.

2. There were only six.

3. The other is the 'Elysium,' which occupies all of one side of the room. Both

Crowned.' The colouring is cold and unanimated, but the figures are finely drawn and graceful, and the whole composition is simple and classic. Indeed he may improve the colouring, as he says in his book that none of the pieces are finished, nor have their full chiaroscuro;<sup>4</sup> of the rest, the 'Orpheus' is very bad, he is blind, dancing and drunk.<sup>5</sup> The 'Grecian Harvest-Home,' if not a mere beginning, is poor enough.<sup>6</sup> In the 'Triumph of the Thames,' Doctor Burney<sup>7</sup> is not only swimming in his clothes, but playing on a harpsichord, a new kind of water-music. For Mrs Montagu and her pupil duchesses and her chamberlain, the Doctor,<sup>8</sup> they are hustled into such a mob of heads that you would think them crowding out of Ranelagh, and so unlike they are, that I did not know which was which. Then there are so many dukes and duchesses in robes besides, that I turned to 'Elysium'<sup>9</sup> to avoid a coronation, and there I found ye all in a masquerade, that is you in your gown and cassock; Charles I in his Vandyck dress; Homer in rags; Leo X<sup>10</sup> in his purple; the Black Prince<sup>11</sup> in armour, and Ossian in flesh and blood, for even that nonentity he has sent to heaven, though indeed after obliging him previously to go and be born in Ireland.<sup>12</sup> I suppose there is some such maxim of the Schoolmen as *Nemo beatificatur qui non*

are forty-two feet long and eleven feet six inches high. See Barry's *Works*, 1809, ii. 361 and 411.

4. 'By the next year I shall be able to go over the whole work, and lick it into such general effect, force of colour, and light and shade, as will be more reconcilable to my own ideas of the necessary mechanical conduct' (ibid. ii. 405).

5. Barry described his purpose as the representation of Orpheus as 'the founder of Grecian theology, uniting in the same character, the legislator, the divine, the philosopher, and the poet, as well as the musician. I have therefore placed him in a wild and savage country, surrounded by people as savage as their soil, to whom he (as a messenger from the gods, and under all the energies of enthusiasm) is pouring forth those songs of instruction which he accompanies . . . with the music of his lyre' (ibid. ii. 324).

6. The picture was, apparently, improved at some later date, and has been described as 'the most satisfactory of the series' (C. R. Leslie and Tom Taylor,

*Life and Times of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1865, ii. 411).

7. The fourth picture celebrates British commerce and the central figure is the Thames personified. Dr Burney appears in this panel because 'music is naturally connected with matters of joy and triumph' and therefore, 'according to all necessary propriety, the retinue of the Thames could not appear without an artist in this way' (Barry's *Works*, ii. 333).

8. The Duchesses of Devonshire and Rutland, and Dr Johnson (*ante* 7 May 1783).

9. The sixth picture, in which Mason is represented.

10. Giovanni de' Medici (1475-1521), Pope Leo X, 1513-21, patron of arts and letters.

11. Edward (1330-76), son of King Edward III; cr. (1337) D. of Cornwall, and (1343) Prince of Wales.

12. 'I agree . . . that Ossian, whatever his abilities may have been as a bard, was an Irish bard' ('An Account,' Barry's *Works*, ii. 371).

*nascitur*.<sup>13</sup> There is a superb shoulder and wing of a mountainous angel that supports all heaven on its back, and a gigantic leg of another that dangles from aloof,<sup>14</sup> and put me in mind of my own *Otranto*.<sup>15</sup>

Barry has expounded all in a book<sup>16</sup> which does not want sense, though full of passion and self, and vulgarisms, and vanity. It is an essay to recommend himself to an establishment.<sup>17</sup> He calls Mortimer<sup>18</sup> superior to Salvator Rosa,<sup>19</sup> though his best merit was being Salvator's imitator; but there is one thought that pleased me extremely. He says that, in his 'Elysium' (which I did not observe, for it is impossible to see a tenth part at one view) he has represented Titian offering his pallet to Raphael.<sup>20</sup>

Jarvis's window from Sir Joshua's 'Nativity'<sup>21</sup> is glorious. The room being darkened and the sun shining through the transparencies, realizes the illumination that is supposed to be diffused from the glory, and has a magic effect.<sup>22</sup>

13. 'There is no place among the blessed for one not born.'

14. 'Behind those palms near the top of the picture, are indistinctly seen, as immersed and lost in the blaze of light, cherubims veiled with their wings, in the act of adoration, and incensing something not seen above them and out of the picture, from whence the light and glory proceeds and is diffused over the whole' (Barry's *Works*, ii. 362).

15. In which HW describes the apparition of a gigantic leg in the gallery of the castle (*Castle of Otranto*, *Works* ii. 28).

16. *An Account of a Series of Pictures*, 1783; HW's copy was sold SH i. 97.

17. The work is dedicated to the King. There are also incidental remarks that could encourage such a suspicion, as when Barry describes himself as 'without patron, fortune, or encouragement' ('An Account,' Barry's *Works*, ii. 315).

18. John Hamilton Mortimer (1741-79), historical painter.

19. 'Near Hogarth I intended to bring in a very able masterly artist, Mortimer, whom the public foolishly let slip through their fingers, without deriving the advantages of which his abilities were capable; it gave me no small concern . . . that he should slink away from his own character, and waste his time upon un-

meaning imitations of the banditti's of Salvator Rosa, a man much his inferior, whenever he would choose to exert himself' ('An Account,' Barry's *Works*, ii. 387).

20. *Ibid.* ii. 385.

21. Thomas Jervais (or Jarvis) (d. 1799) began in 1777 to paint the glass for the great west window of New College Chapel, Oxford, and completed it by 1787 (COLE ii. 170 n. 17). Reynolds painted the design for the window. The representation of the Nativity was to be the central section. It was put in place by Sept. 1783, having previously been exhibited in a 'dark chamber in Pall Mall' (HW to Lady Ossory 9 Sept. 1783). Reynolds's design, bought by the fourth Duke of Rutland for £1200, was destroyed in a fire at Belvoir Castle in 1816 (Leslie and Taylor, *op. cit.* ii. 263; Algernon Graves and W. V. Cronin, *A History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1899-1901, iii. 1177-80).

22. HW doubted, however, that the glass would be equally effective when installed in the chapel (HW to Cole 12 July 1779, COLE ii. 170), and later found his doubts confirmed (HW to Lady Ossory 9 Sept. 1783). Reynolds was also disappointed by Jervais's work, as Mason says in his anecdotes printed in Reynolds's *Notes and Observations on Pictures*, ed. William Cotton, 1859, pp. 58-9.

The Duc de Chartres is arrived.<sup>23</sup> This *amiable Prince* (to talk in the style of the newspapers on like occasions) is, note it, six and thirty, is married and has daughters.<sup>24</sup>

Lady Clermont<sup>25</sup> made a great dinner and assembly for him on Thursday. He came dirty and in a frock with metal buttons enamelled in black, with hounds and horses, a fashion I remember here above forty years ago. On his sleeve was a horse covering a mare, and a dog and bitch equally conjugal.<sup>26</sup> Not contented with this black-guardism, on Lady Duncannon's looking at his coat, he presented his sleeve and said 'Voici la plus jolie!' The moral Madame de Genlis was mistress<sup>27</sup> of this old cub and is now governess to the Princesses, his daughters;<sup>28</sup> you see, we may still learn from France.

From MASON, Monday 19 May 1783

Printed from MS now wsl.

*Memoranda by HW* (apparently for post 31 May 1783):

K. to Ld Oxf.

Safe at war

Aston, May 19th, 1783.

MY friend Mr Alderson brings you with this the copies you requested of Gray's head.<sup>1</sup> It is the first opportunity I have had of sending them, and therefore I do not apologize for the delay. He comes up to be a negotiator between poor Lady Holderness and her quondam son-in-law, who by taking advantage of a lawyer's blunder

23. The Duc de Chartres reached London 4 May 1783 and took lodgings in Portland Place (*London Chronicle* 6-8 May 1783, liii. 434).

24. Only one, Louise-Marie-Adélaïde-Eugénie (1777-1848), called Mlle de Chartres, was living at the time of this letter. Her twin, 'Mlle d'Orléans,' had died in the preceding year (DU DEFFAND iv. 469 n. 5).

25. Frances Cairnes Murray (ca 1734-1820), m. (1752) William Henry Fortescue (1722-1806), cr. (1770) Bn, (1776) Vct, and (1777) E. of Clermont. She and her husband were frequent visitors to Paris and had enjoyed the favour of the royal family (DU DEFFAND ii. 271 n. 1).

26. Mitford omitted this and the following sentence, which were first printed by Mrs Toynbee from Mitford's note-book (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 54). The story is also told in HW's letter to Mann 29 May 1783.

27. This was common gossip, and apparently not unfounded (Jean Harmand, *A Keeper of Royal Secrets: Being the Private and Political Life of Mme de Genlis*, New York, 1913, pp. 88-94).

28. Also to his sons, an unusual arrangement much commented upon at the time (*ante* 7 Feb. 1782 and Harmand, *op. cit.* 94).

1. Mentioned *ante* 7 March and 4 May 1783.

in Lord H.'s will is likely to distress her exceedingly<sup>2</sup> and I shall not wonder if the house, pictures, etc., in Hertford Street follows Sion Hill.<sup>3</sup> 'Tis a sad business and I pity her extremely. If Mr Alderson is lucky enough to find you when he brings this to your house, I should be greatly obliged to you if you would permit him to give you a memorandum relating to an application which Lady Holdernessee made to General Conway some time ago for a young relation<sup>4</sup> of his about an ensigncy. I know he put him on his list, and all I wish and desire of you is (if it be to be done easily) to act the ghost in *Hamlet*, and only to say

This visitation, Conway,  
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.<sup>5</sup>

There is no occasion for you to put on Francis the First's armour<sup>6</sup>—but to be serious, as the commission wanted is for any place, or service, and not to make a parading officer in the park, it would be a kind thing in you so far to interfere and (I would not wish you to go a step further) as to learn whether her Ladyship's application is likely to succeed in any short time, for the young man is at present rather a burthen on his relation, who having a family of his own to provide for, ought to make his charity not only begin but keep at home.

I am much obliged to you for your two last letters and particularly for the entertaining account of Barry's pictures, but I would rather be out of his 'Elysium' than so far out of your books that you should think me incapable of being *persuaded* though *convinced*.<sup>7</sup> That

2. In his unprinted (1955) memoirs 1783–91 (now wsl), HW has written, under the date of 'December 1783': 'The Marquis [of Carmarthen] had pleasing manners and person, but no depth, nor character, nor steadiness. He had commenced a prompt courtier, had turned about, and written a silly pamphlet; had very disreputably forced £1500 a year from his mother-in-law Lady Holdernessee by a slight omission of form in the Earl's will.' In 1784 Lady Holdernessee as plaintiff against Carmarthen and others was upheld by the Court of Chancery in her interpretation of the late Earl's will with respect to an annuity mentioned in it (*The English Reports*, xxviii, 1903, pp. 1188–91).

3. Which Lady Holdernessee had ap-

parently lost, although Holdernessee left it to her as a life-estate (HW to Lady Ossory 19 May 1778). By 1795 it belonged to the Duke of Marlborough (Daniel Lysons, *Environs of London*, 1792–6, iii. 98).

4. Not identified, but apparently (from post 31 May 1783) an Alderson. Conway was commander-in-chief of the army 1782–3.

5. 'Do not forget. This visitation  
Is but to whet thy almost blunted  
purpose'

(*Hamlet* III. iv. 110–11).

6. Bought by HW in 1771. See *SH Accounts* 138–45, COLE i. 243, and illustration in DU DEFFAND iii. 108.

7. Mason is harking back to HW's first

sentence of yours is a severer satire than any I ever penned; I hope it is an unjust one. But self is blind. However, I do assure I hope to see you shortly, for though I mean to go to Nuneham before I come to London, and to keep his Majesty's birthday<sup>8</sup> with his Lordship, yet I intend to visit you and a few other of my friends when that birthday has thinned the town a little.<sup>9</sup> I will conclude this scrawl with an anecdote which I believe will be new to you, though of an oldish date. Soon after the news of Brown's death had reached the r——l ear he went over to Richmond gardens and in a tone of great satisfaction said to the under-gardener: 'Brown is dead! Now Mellicant<sup>10</sup> *you* and *I* can do *here* what we please.' If this is not a characteristic trait, I know not what is. I shall not leave Aston before the first of June, therefore you will have time to favour me with another letter if this reaches you soon, though the bearer is not yet certain what day he shall set out.

Yours very truly,

W. MASON

To MASON, Saturday 31 May 1783

Printed from Mitford ii. 344-8.

Strawberry Hill, May 31, 1783.

**T**HOUGH your letter is dated on the 19th, I did not receive it till yesterday. Mr Alderson left it at my door just as I was getting into my chaise to come hither, and did not send up word he was there, or I should certainly have desired to see him. However, I wrote a line immediately to General Conway, desiring he would look over his memoranda for a recommendation of Lady Holderness (for you did not even tell me the young gentleman's name) and send me word whether anything was likely to be done for him soon. I expect to hear tomorrow before this goes away.

paragraph *ante* 11 May 1783. HW makes himself clear *post* 31 May 1783.

8. 4 June. Mason's correspondence with Harcourt and Alderson shows that he changed his plans, went first to London and did not reach Nuneham until ca 5 July.

9. HW wrote Lady Ossory 15 July 1783

that he had refused to see a party of French visitors at SH because 'Mr Mason, whom I had not seen for a year, was at dinner with me, and was to pass but that one day with me.'

10. Not identified. The anecdote has not been found elsewhere.



I tell you honestly that this was all I could do. When Mr Conway was made commander-in-chief,<sup>1</sup> I earnestly recommended to him to be strict in doing justice, as I think nothing so cruel as to have boys by favour put over old officers; and not above two months ago encouraged him to resist such a partiality for one of his own nephews,<sup>2</sup> telling him that such a refusal would serve him to plead to others. As I knew too that from my friendship with him I should frequently be solicited to apply to him, I desired that whenever I should he would not comply with my request if it was not a perfectly just and reasonable one, and I promised that I would approve instead of taking his refusal ill. I went farther, for one of my own nephews<sup>3</sup> asked me to get him made one of Mr Conway's aide-de-camps: I positively refused. I said Mr Conway had been forty years in the army, had commanded different regiments and must know meritorious officers whom he ought to prefer, and whom it would hurt if he took my recommendation; or that he would be hurt himself if he did not oblige me. I am sure you will approve my conduct, and therefore I do not apologize for doing no more than asking your question, except saying that the young man was desirous of real service. Indeed at present when so many regiments are to be broken,<sup>4</sup> I conclude Mr Conway must be overwhelmed with solicitations, even for the real service, as many officers will be, must be content to be saved without greater indulgence.

I am shocked at what you tell me of the *son-in-law*,<sup>5</sup> and pity the Countess much, yet I am not surprised: there is no discouragement to infamous proceedings. Mr Falkener<sup>6</sup> has just abandoned a daughter of Lord Ashburnham<sup>7</sup> with worse circumstances if possible than Lord

1. Conway became commander-in-chief on the formation of the Rockingham ministry and held the post through successive ministerial changes until Dec. 1783.

2. Probably Hon. (later Lord) George Seymour-Conway (after 1794 known as Lord George Seymour) (1763-1848), 7th son of 1st M. of Hertford, who had recently begun a career in the army (HW to Conway 3 June 1781 and BERRY ii. 40 n. 11).

3. Not identified; presumably a Churchill nephew or a Cholmondeley grand-nephew.

4. Because of the peace. The army at this time was drastically reduced (Sir John W. Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*, 1899-1930, iii. 498-500).

5. Lord Carmarthen.

6. William Augustus Fawkener (1747-1811), diplomatist; clerk extraordinary 1763-78, and clerk in ordinary 1778-1811, to the Privy Council; envoy to Portugal, 1786-7, and to Russia, 1791 (BERRY i. 95 n. 24).

7. Lady Jemima Elizabeth Ashburnham (1762-86), 2d dau. of John (1724-1812), 2d E. of Ashburnham; m. (1785) James Graham, M. of Graham, later (1790) 3d D. of Montrose (GEC *sub* Ashburnham and Montrose; Collins, *Peerage*, 1812, iv. 263; Lady Mary Coke, MS Journal 19 Dec. 1782, 30 June 1783).

Egremont did my niece.<sup>8</sup> You will not wonder when you reflect who was his patron.<sup>9</sup>

You say I am very severe, why I am very angry. What the deuce is the fullness or emptiness of the town to you! Am I never to see you but after a plague? Will you never come to London but when you have not an acquaintance in it? Beauties or ministers may affect to dread being crowded to death, but nobody haunts us who have no power, no credit. I care for as few as you, and yet I can go tamely about and nobody molests me; if you will not come till you can give the law, why I shall be in my grave. You had better laugh as I do, at my own departed visions. I will not give up my friends and the world (as far as I choose to have anything to do with it) because it does not please to be amended accordingly to the plan I had drawn for it: well, but you say you will come, so I will scold no more, though I cannot bear your flinging away your talents on a province or country town; you was born to fill the mouth of fame and not to be proclaimed by a penny trumpet at a village fair.

Most of the French invasion are returned.<sup>10</sup> I have not seen one of them, cock or hen.<sup>11</sup> I was so scandalously treated about my dear old friend's papers<sup>12</sup> that except her memory and Tonton, I will never have anything to do more with or love anything that comes from France. I like Mr Meynell's<sup>13</sup> expression; he is so tired of these visitors that he says *he wishes we were safe at war again*.

Your story on Brown's death is worth a million, yet I can match it from the same *mouth*,<sup>14</sup> though I cannot write it without commit-

8. See *ante* 8 Aug. 1780.

9. Presumably William Augustus (1721-65), D. of Cumberland, who 'loved gaming, women, and his own favourites, and yet had not one sociable virtue' (*Mem. Geo. II* i. 103). The Duke had been on friendly terms with Fawkener's father, Sir Everard Fawkener, and Fawkener was named after the Duke (DNB *sub* Sir Everard Fawkener).

10. That is, the French visitors who flocked to London after the Peace had gone back to France. This appears to contradict HW's remark to Mann of 29 May 1783, 'We have not only the Duc de Chartres, but three Ladies of the Court, the Ducs de Coigny, Fitz-James, and Polignac, husband of the Queen's favourite, and various others, and more coming.'

11. HW's later letters of this period,

notably those to Lady Ossory 20 June and 15 July 1783 and to Mann 30 July 1783, show that he later saw many French visitors.

12. Mme du Deffand's bequest of her manuscripts to HW, which were withheld from him temporarily by her executor, the Prince de Beauvau (*ante* 26 Nov. 1781 and n. 11).

13. Hugo Meynell (1735-1808), of Bradley, Derby, and Quorndon, Leics; M. P. Lichfield 1762-8, Lymington 1769-74, Stafford 1774-80; 'father of fox-hunting.' See MONTAGU i. 240 n. 7 and *ante* 12 May 1778, n. 3.

14. The King's. The anecdote has not been found. It may have been the story in HW's mind when he noted 'K. to Ld Oxf.' on Mason's letter of 19 May 1783.

ting some names that I must not mention. If I ever do see you, you shall hear it, that is if I don't forget it, but we meet so seldom, that half the anecdotes I had for you will be mouldy. There is no sense in living but in a great capital, one can choose one's way of life, and what sort of company one pleases. There is more variety of sense, and fewer prejudices: I am sure from my own practice one can live as retiredly as one chooses, and do more what one will than in any other place, without any ennui. Pray what is one to do in the country, if so unfortunate as to grow tired of one's first favourite, one's self? What! have recourse to one's neighbours? oh! they are charming company! They tell you some antiquated lie out of the newspapers, that in London did not gain credit in the steward's parlour even on its birthday. No, I have no patience with your living amongst country squires, instead of living amongst men.

Sunday, June 1.

I have got a note<sup>15</sup> from Mr Conway. He says he finds on his list a Mr Alderton<sup>16</sup> recommended by Lady Holderness: but that she applied before the conclusion of the war, when he thought it would rain ensigncies; that he is now left with above an hundred engagements, and that the new plan of *seconding two companies* (I don't understand military Hebrew) *with their officers on all the corps*<sup>17</sup> will increase his difficulty of performing them. This does not look as if your friend would be served soon; however, as he bids me tell him if Mr Alderton is the person, as I shall tell him it is within a letter, I do not despair. I write a line to Mr Alderson to desire he will call on me in town on Friday; and this I send to London, by a gentleman who dines with me, to Lord Harcourt, who will deliver it to you on the Birthday,<sup>18</sup>

When you are singing the day and singing the song  
And singing the day all night long.<sup>19</sup>

15. Missing.

16. Probably a mistake for Alderson (*ante* 19 May 1783).

17. That is, the officers of two companies in each of the corps were to be temporarily removed (OED *sub* 'second' v. 2).

18. The King's, 4 June. HW was not aware of Mason's change of plans.

19. Probably a parody of Colley Cib-

ber's official laureate odes, burlesqued by many of his contemporaries and notably by Henry Fielding in his *Historical Register for the Year 1736* (C. W. Nichols, 'Fielding and the Cibbers,' *Philological Quarterly*, 1922, i. 280-1; H. W. Taylor, 'Fielding upon Cibber,' *Modern Philology*, 1931, xxix. 83; Cunningham viii. 375). The form of the quotation in this letter may represent HW's faulty recollection of

PS. I have writ to Mr Conway again. The Prince of Wales and the Duke de Chartres sup with him tonight. I excused myself, and as it is a glorious day I have told him how glad I am to be here rather than in Warwick Street! and that as much sun as would gild a daisy, is preferable in my eyes to all the Dan-de-Lions and Cœur-de-Lions, that ever supped since Charlemagne.

## TO MASON, Monday 9 June 1783

Printed from Mitford ii. 349-51.

Strawberry Hill, June 9, 1783.

**I** HAVE seen Mr Alderson and told him what General Conway says, to whom I have spoken again, and who will serve his friend when he can, though it will not be soon<sup>1</sup> from the circumstances I mentioned, and of which Mr Alderson allows the force.

There are two new pieces published about Gray's poems; one is called *Criticisms on the Elegy*,<sup>2</sup> and pretends to be written by Johnson. I was told it would divert me, that it seems to criticize Gray, but really laughs at Johnson. I sent for it and skimmed it over, but am not at all clear what it means—no recommendation of anything; I rather think the author wishes to be taken by Gray's admirers for a ridiculer of Johnson, and by the latter's for a censurer of Gray.

The other piece is a professed defence of Gray against Johnson, by Potter the translator of Æschylus;<sup>3</sup> it is sensibly written, is civil to Johnson and yet severe, but though this is the declared intention,

Fielding's parody in the *Historical Register*:

'This is a day, in days of yore,  
Our fathers never saw before:  
This is a day, 'tis one to ten,  
Our sons will never see again.  
Then sing the day,  
And sing the song,  
And thus be merry  
All day long'

(Fielding's *Works*, ed. Leslie Stephen, 1882, x. 207-8).

2. *A Criticism on the Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard; Being a Continuation of Dr J——n's Criticism on the Poems of Gray* was published 22 May 1783 (*London Chronicle* 20-2 May, liii. 488). The author was John Young (ca 1750-1820), professor of Greek at Glasgow. HW's copy is in his 'Tracts of George III,' now wsl.

3. Publication of Potter's *An Inquiry into Some Passages in Dr Johnson's Lives of the Poets; Particularly His Observations on Lyric Poetry, and the Odes of Gray* was announced in the *London Chronicle* 27-9 May 1783 (liii. 511).

1. The *Army Lists* for the next ten years include neither an Alderson nor an Alderton.

I have heard that the true object was to revenge the attack on Lord Lyttelton<sup>4</sup> at the instigation of Mrs Montagu,<sup>5</sup> who has her full share of incense, and who with insipid Bishop Hurd is pronounced the two best critics of this or any age!<sup>6</sup> Were I Johnson, I had rather be criticized than flattered so fulsomely. There is nothing more foolish than the hyperboles of contemporaries on one another, who like the nominal Dukes of Aquitaine and Normandy at a coronation have place given to them above all peers, and the next day shrink to simple knights.<sup>7</sup> I have been reading some more of those pinchbeck encomiums in Beattie's new volume.<sup>8</sup> He talks of the *great* Lord Lyttelton,<sup>9</sup> and of the sublime and *apostolic* simplicity of my Lords Hurd and Porteus.<sup>10</sup> Should not you like to hear St Peter toast Madame Hagerdorne with the former,<sup>11</sup> and St Paul in a Fast sermon out-flattering Bishop Butler with the latter? I have waded through many a silly book in my day, as my eyes know to their sorrow, but poor souls, they never had a more cruel penance imposed on them than this quarto of Beattie, though they did read the whole reign of Henry II, all Cumberland's works in metre and out of metre, all the *Archæologias*, and many other reverend bodies of antiquity and heraldry; Beattie's indeed is the reverse of those *anile tomes* for it is *in usum* of the cradle and nursery.<sup>13</sup> I have got through 109 pages,

4. Potter describes Johnson's observations on Lord Lyttelton as cruel and unjust, and asks, 'If the eminent virtues, the liberal disposition, and benevolent heart of Lord Lyttelton could not secure his character from such a rude attack, who may hope to escape?' (*An Inquiry*, p. 8).

5. Mrs Montagu approved of Potter's *Inquiry* (Reginald Blunt, *Mrs Montagu, 'Queen of the Blues'*, [1923], ii. 163-4), but there is no evidence that she had suggested or encouraged the essay. For her quarrel with Johnson see *ante* 27 Jan., 28 Feb., 3 and 29 March 1781.

6. *An Inquiry*, p. 33.

7. 'And here I take occasion to notice two attendants on our English coronations who have been transplanted from those of France. It is usual for two gentlemen of the Court to walk in the procession as dukes of Normandy and Guienne, habited in the ancient dress of the ducal peers of France' (Arthur Taylor, *The Glory of Regality*, 1820, pp. 104-5).

8. Publication of James Beattie's *Dissertations Moral and Critical* was announced in the *London Chronicle* 15-17 May 1783 (liii. 470). HW's copy was sold SH v. 13.

9. In a footnote citing Lyttelton's *History of the Life of King Henry the Second*, Beattie refers to the author as 'the great historian' (op. cit. 540). In another place Lyttelton is included in a list of those who 'gave proof of the soundest judgement, as well as of a most comprehensive mind' (ibid. 148). See *ante* 21 July 1772, n. 29.

10. 'And they who have had the happiness to observe, and to feel, that sublime and apostolic simplicity, and that mild though commanding energy, which distinguish both the composition and the pronunciation, of a Hurd and a Porteus, will be at no loss to discover the originals' (ibid. 57).

11. For Hurd's friendship with Mrs Hagerdorne, see *ante* 19 May 1780, n. 31.

13. The book is dedicated to George

but dearly as I love quartos I doubt I shall never compass the other five hundred and fifty pages, though in equity I would fain try whether I cannot find one page that is not the poorest commonplace that was ever repenned. He calls his work *Dissertations, Moral and Critical*. I have corrected the last word in my copy into *Tritical*.

You will find more merit in Mr Crabb's poem of *The Village*,<sup>14</sup> at least in the first canto. The second is a tribute, and much too long, to the Duke of Rutland's passionate fondness for his brother,<sup>15</sup> and nothing to the purpose of the first part. The brave young man deserved an immortal epitaph; but this is a funeral sermon. However Mr Crabb is a more agreeable poet than your heroic friend<sup>16</sup> Mr Hayley, and writes lines that one can remember.

My *treillage* of roses begs its duty to the flower garden at Nuneham,<sup>17</sup> and my towers long to be gossips at the christening of the tower that is to be there. My printing-house has its longings too, and if you have a mind to make it completely happy, you will contribute something to the nosegay, of which I have yet got nothing but Mr Whitehead's charming sprig.<sup>18</sup> Remember I have never printed anything of yours yet, and my press cannot die in peace till it does.

Gordon (1770-1836), styled Marquess of Huntly until 1827, 5th D. of Gordon, 1827.

14. Publication of *The Village, a Poem, in Two Books*, by George Crabbe (1754-1832), was announced in the *London Chronicle* 24-7 May 1783, liii. 500. HW's copy is in his 'Poems of George III,' now in the Harvard Library.

15. Lord Robert Manners (1758-82), 3d son of John Manners, M. of Granby, commanded the *Resolution*, 74 guns, in the naval battle in the West Indies of 12 April 1782 (*ante* 25 May 1782 and n. 4), and died 24 April of wounds received in the engagement. Charles Manners (1754-87), 4th D. of Rutland, 1779, was one of Crabbe's patrons and had made him his chaplain. The tribute to Lord Robert

Manners occupies nearly half of the second book. In 1784 Crabbe contributed a memoir of Lord Robert to the *Annual Register* for 1783 (George Crabbe the younger, *The Life of George Crabbe*, ed. Edmund Blunden, 1947, p. 113).

16. So-called because of his *Essay on Epic Poetry in Five Epistles to the Reverend Mr Mason* (*ante* 25 June 1782).

17. To which this letter was apparently addressed, although Mason was not to arrive there until ca 5 July.

18. Probably Whitehead's verses on Nuneham that HW admired (*ante* 7 Feb. 1782). The proposed volume seems to have been planned as a collection of the works of the Nuneham circle.

TO MASON, Monday 22 September 1783

Printed from Mitford ii. 351-4.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 22, 1783.

YOU desired me to write to you if I heard any news, but though a letter appears, do not expect any novelty. I have not seen the shadow of a politician since my return,<sup>1</sup> nor scarce anything but rain, and my apothecary, and yet if the former has maintained my rheumatism, the latter has cured my nightly fever by the bark, on which I determined instead of James's powder, lest the latter should only make an exchange for the gout. The bark the very first night was as efficient as opium, and I now sleep almost as well as ever, which is like a dormouse.

I do not write to notify this unimportant detail, though it is the total of my history—no, but I want to know how your pupil Mrs Harcourt<sup>2</sup> advances by your marriage of oil and water-colours.<sup>3</sup> Next, if it answers, I should be glad to have the receipt, that is if you have no objection and do not intend to keep your nostrum a secret till you can announce the discovery to your own honour, not that I will rob you of it. I have two purposes to serve, one to communicate the process to Lady Di, the other to employ a painter to oil some of her drawings,<sup>4</sup> if your method will do for that end, and will not hurt them; but I repeat that I do not desire you to acquaint me with the process if you have the least objection.

I do not know whether my nieces are yet arrived at Nuneham; in short I am *d'une ignorance crasse!* and have been trifling entirely at home alone. I have given my Grammont to Dodsley to be reprinted,<sup>5</sup> which you will say is not much employment; oh! but it is, and a dis-

1. From a visit to Nuneham early in Sept. 1783 (HW to Lady Ossory 9 Sept. 1783).

2. Mrs William Harcourt (*ante* 21 Oct. 1779). 'At Nuneham I was much pleased with the improvements both within doors and without. Mr Mason was there; and, as he shines in every art, was assisting Mrs Harcourt with his new discoveries in painting, by which he will unite miniature and oil. Indeed, she is a very apt and extraordinary scholar' (HW to Lord Strafford 12 Sept. 1783).

3. 'Mason seems to have been attempting to paint in oil-colours mixed with the "body-colour" used in miniature-painting and illumination (minium or red lead)' (Dr Toynbee's note in *Supplement* ii. 165).

4. Mason sent his formula (*post* 8 Nov. 1783), but what use HW made of it is not known.

5. Dodsley's reprint of HW's SH edition of Anthony Hamilton's *Mémoires du Comte de Grammont* was published 22 Nov. 1783 (*London Chronicle* 20-2 Nov. 1783, liv. 501).

agreeable one too, for I correct the proof sheets, the most tiresome occupation either as editor or printer. Pray whisper to Lady Harcourt that she has not given me enough to occupy me in either capacity for a week, and that I beg she will bring me more to town before I begin.

I repeat a prayer of the same kind to you. First, as you are a poet I must print something of yours; next, as you are a painter, I was so pleased with your altar-piece<sup>6</sup> that I long to have a bit by your hand; why should you not execute a small piece, at least, with your new discovery? I should like it soon—if you ever did do anything soon, that I may insert it in the description of my collection<sup>7</sup> which I am finishing, and for which all the plates are ready. Paint me any little scene out of your own *Garden*. I wish I was worthy to ask for any piece of music composed by yourself for your other discovered marriage the celestinette. However, as I do not want an ear so much but that I can celebrate a performer, I send you the following epitaph which I wrote three or four years ago, and found t'other day amongst some old papers. It was written at Lady Ossory's desire on her losing a favourite piping bullfinch, which was buried under a rose-tree at Ampthill. The lines I think you never saw, and it is a great presumption to send poetry from the sexton of Parnassus to the high priest; it is folly too to send such poetry from *Twitnam*, but it is your fault not mine if you carried off all Mr Pope's inheritance and left me as poor a bard as the bellman: *que voici*.

All flesh is grass, and so are feathers too:  
 Finches must die as well as I or you.  
 Beneath a damask rose in good old age,  
 Here lies the tenant of a noble cage;  
 For forty moons he charmed his lady's ear  
 And piped obedient oft as she drew near  
 Though now stretched out upon a clay-cold bier. }  
 But when the last shrill flageolet shall sound,  
 And raise all dicky-birds from holy ground,  
 This little corpse again its wings shall prune, }  
 And sing eternally the self-same tune  
 From everlasting night to everlasting noon.<sup>8</sup> }

6. The altar-piece of the church at Nuneham, designed by Lord Harcourt, contained a painting of the Good Samaritan by Mason (*Harcourt Papers* iii. 201).

7. The *Description of the Villa*, 1784. Mason seems not to have sent any painting.

8. Printed in *Works* iv. 389.



When I send you these lines to prove that I do not totally want an ear, I put myself in mind of a story of Mr Raftor, who, visiting a lady who never stirs out of London, and asking her if she never went into the country, she replied, 'No, but I have lately got something *rural*, I have bought a cuckoo-clock.'

From MASON, ca Wednesday 5 November 1783

Missing.

To MASON, Saturday 8 November 1783

Printed from Mitford ii. 354-8.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 8, 1783.

I AM glad to have heard from you at last.<sup>1</sup> I thought you had dropped me: which would be a little unkind, as perhaps I may not long be *à charge* to anybody. I have scarce enjoyed two days of health together since I saw you. My rheumatism is not gone, and a sciatica finding how many of the family were established with me, came to join its cousins. In short my decay wears as many countenances as life itself does. I break very sensibly to myself in every respect—but enough of that.

Your Committee I should not have named if you did not; when I found we differed in opinions, I said no more.<sup>2</sup> That you should be tired of them does not surprise me: it is what I foresaw would happen. I have had much more practice of that sort than you. I have been acquainted with parties all my life, and at times have been far engaged in them. I will tell you a reflection I made in 1766: *that it is vexatious even to govern fools: and as vexatious not to have fools enough to govern*,<sup>3</sup>—which perhaps may be your case. I told you truly

1. The letter is missing.

2. On 11 Oct. 1783 HW wrote Lord Strafford: 'I am very sorry Mr Mason concurs in trying to revive the Associations.' On 1 Oct. 1783 Mason attended a meeting of the York Committee of Association at which a resolution was adopted to extend

thanks to Pitt for his proposals, which were offered to Parliament and rejected 7 May 1783, for the reform of Parliamentary abuses (Wyvill, *Political Papers* ii. 258-62).

3. If HW committed the observation to writing in 1766 it has not been found.

above a year ago, that I would meddle no more with politics:<sup>4</sup> and I have adhered to my resolution. I saw a moment<sup>5</sup> (which I had long despaired of seeing arrive) thrown away by the treachery of Lord Shelburne<sup>6</sup> and I had not youth or spirits to recommence the pursuit. After that, when his folly had done mischief to his country and but momentary good to himself,<sup>7</sup> I saw that two parties being split into three factions it must happen that two of them would unite—and it was indifferent to me whether North, Mansfield and Loughborough, or Thurlow, Dundas, Jenkinson and Shelburne were to be adopted<sup>8</sup>—so that, coalition for coalition, one is as bad as the other. As I have no views to serve, no personal resentments to gratify, I cannot embrace either division, when all were equally guilty, except that I think worst of the traitor,<sup>9</sup> who prevented the good that might have been done a year and a half ago, and who broke the former Opposition to pieces. I must die consistent as I have lived, and cannot bring myself to say that either half of the criminals deserved to be hanged and the other half to be pardoned.

But do you know that I suspect your having a graver reason than you mention for being disgusted? Indeed I flatter myself you had, as in that offence I should heartily concur with you. It is on a point in which we have ever agreed; you cannot approve a correspondence with a popish army;<sup>10</sup> you cannot believe that an army of 40,000

4. HW said this *ante* 17 July and 7 Dec. 1782.

5. The victory of the late Opposition.

6. For HW's denunciation of Shelburne's political conduct on the death of Rockingham, see *Last Journals* ii. 520-2.

7. Shelburne's negotiation of the peace of 1783 contributed to the downfall of his ministry.

8. 'The friends that the King abandoned on Lord North's fall destroyed the trust that servile men had put in the King, and the various manœuvres and intrigues of Shelburne and his antagonists have divided the Scots: Lord Mansfield and Lord Loughborough took a different side from the Lord Advocate. The King's resistance of the coalition of North and Fox produced the foolish but salutary avowal of Jenkinson that there is a secret influence; and should Fox and North prove bad ministers, which I think very unlikely, Lord Thurlow, the Duke of Richmond,

Mr Pitt, the Lord Advocate, and even Shelburne himself will not be timid or tacit opponents' (*Last Journals* ii. 522).

9. Shelburne.

10. In the spring of 1783 the Irish Volunteers (independent military organizations formed by the citizens of various localities) began serious political activity in behalf of Parliamentary reform in Ireland. A Committee of Correspondence was established, and to this committee Wyvill, the leader of the Yorkshire Association, sent his encouragement. One of the issues in debate by the Volunteers was the question of the extension of the franchise to Catholics. The Volunteers had originally been exclusively Protestant, but in 1782 a considerable number of Catholics had been admitted into many of the corps. HW's description of the Volunteers as a 'popish army' is, however, misleading. See Patrick Rogers, *The Irish Volunteers and Catholic Emancipation*, 1934, pp. 79 and

men, 30,000 of whom are papists, are fit instruments to reform a Protestant constitution, to establish liberty, or to protect the property of Protestants to which Roman Catholics think they have a better title, you whose sentiments of him I know cannot *coalesce* with the prelatie Earl,<sup>11</sup> nor wish success to a toleration which you so much condemned, which was devised by the Court and was infused into our friends, and is at this moment loudly avowed and encouraged by one<sup>12</sup> of whom I am sure you do not think well. No change of times or persons, no heterogeneous commixture of the partisans that lead factions, can authorize or justify an adoption of Catholics into civil government. This has ever been—ever will be my ruling principle. Papists and liberty are contradictions, and so I fear it will too soon appear!

When I am in so grave a strain, I will pass to the latter part of your letter before I reply to other passages in the former part. You amaze me by even supposing that the epitaph I sent you could allude to the immortality of the soul. Believe me I think it is as serious a subject as you do, nor I am sure did you ever hear me treat it lightly. The three last lines which justly offended you if you so interpreted them, were intended to laugh at the absurd idea of the beatified sitting on golden thrones and chanting eternal hallelujahs to golden harps. When men ascribe their own puerile conceptions to the Almighty Author of all things, what do they but prove that their visions are of human invention? What can be more ridiculous than to suppose that Omnipotent Goodness and Wisdom created, and will select the most virtuous of its creatures to sing his praises to all eternity?—it is an idea that I should think could never have entered but into the head of a king, who might delight to have his courtiers sing Birthday odes forever. Pray be assured that I never trifle on so solemn and dear an interest as the immortality of the soul; though I do not subscribe to every childish and fantastic employment that silly people have chalked out for it. There is no word in any language expressive enough for the adoration and gratitude we owe to the Author of all Good! an eternity of praises and thanks is due to him—but are we thence to infer that *that* is the sole tribute in which he will delight, and the

92-3. In his memoirs for Oct. 1783 HW wrote, 'Mr Mason, though eager against papists, leagues with the Irish Volunteers.'

11. Frederick Augustus Hervey, 4th E. of Bristol, Bishop of Derry, played a

militant part in the promotion of Catholic emancipation (Rogers, op. cit. 105-15).

12. Burke. See original draft of this letter, below.

sole occupation he destines for beings on whom he has bestowed thought and reason? The epitaph did not deserve half a line to be said on it: but your criticism, indeed your misconception of it will excuse my saying so much in my own justification. It is no irreligion to smile at a chorister's notions of Paradise. Perhaps I on my side may have misunderstood you too—forgive me if I have, but you do not seem so serious on the tragedy<sup>13</sup> you have been writing as I wish you were. I shall be very glad if you was in earnest. One of my most fervent wishes has long been that you would exercise more frequently the *verve* that is so eminently marked as your characteristic talent—your neglect of it is one of my quarrels to your Association. Ten thousand and ten thousand reasons forbid your rising to illustrious fame as secondary leader of a county meeting; you have but to shut the door of your room and take your pen and choose your place on Parnassus.

I will dispense with your improving painting and music, and apropos I thank you very much for your receipt<sup>14</sup> and ten times more for the hopes you give me of a picture by your hand, in short I may be an officious, nay impertinent zealot, but I am jealous of everything that intercepts your renown. I have that partiality for a genuine and original genius that I cannot bear its turning to the right or left. To *invent* in the arts as you have done in both those I have mentioned, is no deviation but new proofs of genius. It is none when you tell me I have an ear, alas! it is what I have most sensibly felt I want, but I shall not talk on so poor a subject as myself, and you may be sure I am sincere by my worship of Gray and you. Only men who feel their own inferiority are enthusiasts to others.

Thank you for your corrected epitaph<sup>15</sup> and pray tell me more of your tragedy.

PS. In looking again at your letter I find you are to be at York on Tuesday 11th, consequently will set out on the 10th, and then this

13. Called 'The Indians' by Mitford (i. 404), but 'Anacouna' by Mason in his letters to Alderson of 7 and 13 Jan. 1784. It seems to have been completed, but never acted or published. See *post* 25 Dec. 1783 and n. 7. HW may have suggested the subject to Mason; see *ante* 14 April 1777 and n. 6.

14. Mason's formula for combining oil

and water-colours (*ante* 22 Sept. 1783).

15. Among the eight epitaphs printed in vol. i of Mason's *Works* (1811) is one for Lancelot Brown (p. 143), inscribed on his monument in the church at Fen Stanton, Hunts. This may be the one referred to here. HW had also tried his hand at an epitaph for Brown (*ante* 10 Feb. 1783).

might not find you at Aston or York, if directed to the one or the other; therefore as it contains nothing that will not keep cold, I shall not dispatch it till Monday, when it is sure of finding you resident at York.

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Draft of the preceding letter, printed in full for the first time from photostat of MS among the Berry papers in the BM, Add. MSS 37728 fol. 16-17; extract printed by Mary Berry in *Works* iv. 390.

*Headed by HW: To Mr Mason.*

Nov. 1783.

I am glad to have heard from you at last; I thought you had dropped me; which would be a little unkind, as probably I shall not long be *à charge* to anybody. I have scarce had two days of health since I saw you. My rheumatism continues, and a sciatica joined it. In short, my decay wears as many countenances as life itself does. I break very sensibly to myself in every respect—but enough of that!

Your Committee I should not have named, if you did not. When I found we did not concur in opinions, I said no more. That you are tired of them, does not surprise me: it was what I foresaw would happen. I have had much more experience of that sort than you. I have been acquainted with parties all my life and at times been far engaged in them; and I will tell you a reflection I made in 1766; *that it is vexatious even to govern fools*, and as vexatious not to have fools enough to govern—which perhaps may be your case. I told you truly above a year ago, that I would meddle no more with politics, and have adhered to my resolution. I saw a moment, which I had never expected would arrive, thrown away by the treachery of Lord Shelburne, and I had not youth or spirits to recommence the pursuit. After that, I saw that two parties being split into three factions, it must happen that two of them would unite—and it was indifferent to me, whether North, Mansfield and Loughborough, or Thurlow, Dundas and Shelburne were to be adopted. So that, coalition for coalition, one is as bad as the other. As I have no views to serve, no enmities to gratify, I cannot embrace either division, where all were equally guilty; except that I think worst of the traitor, who prevented the good that might have been done a year and half ago, and who broke the former Opposition to pieces. I must die consistent as I have lived, and cannot bring myself to say, that either half of the criminals deserved to be hanged, and the other half to be pardoned.

But do you know that I suspect your having a graver reason than you mention for your being disgusted. Indeed I flatter myself you had, as in that offence I should heartily concur with you, as we have ever agreed in

that point. You cannot approve a correspondence with a popish army; you cannot believe<sup>1</sup> that an army<sup>2</sup> of forty thousand men, thirty of whom are papists, are fit instruments to reform a Protestant constitution, to establish liberty, or to protect the property of Protestants, to which Roman Catholics think they have a better title. You, whose sentiments of him I know, cannot coalesce with the prelatical Earl,<sup>3</sup> nor wish success to a toleration, which you so much condemned, which was devised by the Court, and was infused into our friends and is still upheld by *one*,<sup>4</sup> of whom I am sure you do not think well. No change of times, no heterogeneous commixture of the partisans that lead factions, can authorize or justify an adoption of Catholics. This ever has been, ever will be my ruling principle. Papists and liberty are contradictions—and I fear, so it will too soon appear!<sup>5</sup> I should beg your pardon, were I even to say that I hoped this is your creed as well as mine—No, I do not *hope*; I am sure it is.

When I am in so grave a strain, I will pass to the latter part of your letter, before I reply to other passages in the former part. You amaze me by even supposing that the epitaph<sup>6</sup> I sent you could allude to the immortality of the soul. Believe me I think it as serious a subject as you do; nor I am sure, did you ever hear me drop a hint of doubting it. The three last lines, which reasonably offended you, if you so interpreted them, were intended to laugh at that absurd idea of the beatified sitting on golden thrones and chanting eternal alleluias to golden harps. When men ascribe their own puerile conceptions to the Almighty Author of everything, what do they, but prove that their system is of human invention? What can be more ridiculous than to suppose that Omnipotent Goodness and Wisdom<sup>7</sup> created and selected the most virtuous of its creatures to sing his praises to all eternity—it is an idea that I should think could never have entered but into the head of a king who might delight to hear them chant Birthday odes forever. Pray be assured that I never trifle on so solemn and dear an interest as the immortality of the soul, though I do not subscribe to every childish or fantastic employment that silly people have chalked out for it. There is no word in any language expressive enough for the adoration and gratitude we owe to the Author of all good. An eternity of praises and thanks is due to him—but thence are we to infer that that is the sole tribute in which he will delight, and the sole occupation he destines for beings on whom he has bestowed thought and reason?—The epitaph did not deserve half a line to be said on it, but your criticism,

1. 'nor pretend to believe,' crossed out.

2. 'Irish volunteers' (HW's interlinear note).

3. 'Bristol' (HW).

4. 'Burke' (HW).

5. The rest of this paragraph is crossed out.

6. 'Epitaph on a Bullfinch' (HW).

7. 'and Power,' crossed out.

indeed misconception of it, will excuse my saying so much in my own justification.

Perhaps I on my side may have misunderstood you too—forgive me if I have, but you do not seem so serious on the tragedy you have been writing as I wish you were. I shall be very glad if you were in earnest. One of my most fervent wishes has long been that you would exercise more frequently the *verve* that is so eminently marked as your characteristic talent. Your neglect of it is one of my principal quarrels to your Association; ten thousand and ten thousand reasons forbid your rising to illustrious fame as secondary leader of a county meeting—you have but to shut the door of your own room and take your pen, and choose your place on Parnassus. Do not frown, if I tell you a couplet I have often repeated to myself though I never breathed it in any other ear, but when I have recollected the precious and alas! unfinished fragment, that you have in your writing box, and know that you was mustering Tory squires and maudlin justices of peace to sign manifestos, I have cried silently, 'Well!

If I could be Dryden  
I'd not be Jack of Leyden!<sup>8</sup>

I<sup>9</sup> will dispense with your improving painting and music—and apropos, I thank you very much for your receipt, and ten times more for the hopes you give me of a picture by your hand. In short, I may be an officious, nay impertinent zealot, but I am jealous of your fame. I have that partiality for a genuine and original genius, that I cannot bear its turning to the right or the left. To *invent* in the arts, as you have done in both those I have mentioned, is no deviation, but new proofs of genius. It is none when you tell me I have an ear—alas! it is what I have most sensibly felt I want!—but I shall not talk on so poor a subject as myself—and you may be sure I am sincere, by my worship of Gray and you. Only men who feel their own inferiority are enthusiasts to others.

Thank you for your corrected epitaph, and pray tell me more of your tragedy.

8. 'This paragraph [from 'Do not frown'] was not sent, lest Mr M. should take the couplet ill' (HW). For 'Jack of Leyden' see *ante* 2 April 1782, n. 2.

9. Preceded by 'Oh! yes,' crossed out.

## From MASON, Thursday 25 December 1783

Printed from MS now WSL.

Address: The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

Postmark: YORK 29 DE.

York, Dec. 25th, 1783.

I REMEMBER when the coalition was first promulged I began a letter to you with, 'Chaos is come again.'<sup>1</sup> But now amid 'this wreck of' political 'elements and crash' of East Indian 'worlds,'<sup>2</sup> I will content myself with merely wishing you a Merry Christmas, which I should wish to enjoy myself if a tearing<sup>3</sup> toothache would suffer me so to do. Under such a malady I trust you will forgive my late silence, and (calling it a judgment on me for my epistolary offences) give me your absolution.

Now that you have lain aside writing me political news I am as much out of the basket<sup>4</sup> as a York alderman, and as the late wonderful event in the House of Lords has not induced you to take up your pen, I conclude I must not expect any more entertainment from you of that sort. You have, however, a hundred other topics constantly at hand and therefore I shall hope for an answer to this much sooner than I deserve to receive it.

I either expressed myself very ill or you greatly misunderstood my meaning about your bird epitaph, but it is not now worth while to resume the subject, only so far as to say I am not sorry you misconceived me, since it produced from you so excellent a paragraph relating to your own creed on that important subject.

1. See *ante* 5 March 1783.

2. Mason's adaptation of Addison's 'The wrecks of matter, and the crush of worlds' (*Cato* V. i. 31), alluding to the consequences of the unexpected defeat of Fox's India Bill in the House of Lords 17 Dec. 1783. The bill, which transferred considerable power from the East India Company to the government, would have provided Fox with opportunities for patronage; in the eyes of the King, it represented a curtailment of the royal prerogative. The bill passed the House of Commons, and when it came to the Lords the King let it be known that he would consider any peer who voted for it his enemy. The

defeat of the bill was followed by the dismissal of Fox and North and the entire coalition ministry, and by the appointment of William Pitt, then twenty-four years old, as first lord of the Treasury and chancellor of the Exchequer. The success of the bill in the House of Commons made Pitt's position difficult, and the withdrawal of his supporter and the leading engineer of Fox's defeat, Lord Temple, a few days after the appointment, increased the political confusion.

3. Or 'teazing,' as Mitford reads. The MS is ambiguous.

4. That is, as much cut off from the world.



I was really serious when I told you that I was writing a tragedy. I completed the first sketch during the month I was at Aston, and since I came here have written the first two acts, in spite of a hundred Associating impediments<sup>5</sup> which came upon me whether I would or no, and I fully hope to finish the whole while I stay here, if no general election should take place,<sup>6</sup> in which case I must attend to the calls of friendship, but to no other. My story is an Indian one<sup>7</sup> partly feigned, and what probably would appear too horrid on the stage. My aim in writing it is to show that the unities may be preserved even to French exactitude, and yet the whole afford sufficient interest, incident and variety. I wish, however, you would not mention what I am about except to Lord Harcourt or Mr Stonhewer, who both know it.<sup>8</sup>

Having nothing more to say I must repeat my wish to hear from you soon and if you only tell me that you keep free from your too frequent winter visitor, I shall be satisfied. Believe me, dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

W. MASON

5. The Yorkshire Association was currently active because of the resignation of his Parliamentary seat by Sir George Savile, member for the county of York (Wyvill, *Political Papers* ii. 273-310).

6. It was generally believed that the King meant to dissolve Parliament to give Pitt an opportunity to strengthen his position, but the dissolution did not take place until 7 April 1784 (HW to Mann 19 Dec. 1783; Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiv. 239-40, 775).

7. Mitford copied Mason's note on the play: 'The scene of this play lies in Zaragua, one of the five kingdoms in the isle of Haiti, afterwards called by the Spaniards Hispaniola. The destruction of this kingdom, on which this tragedy is founded, happened in the year 1505 . . .' (Mitford i. 404, collated with Add. MSS 32563 fol. 82).

8. Mason wrote Harcourt 24 Oct. 1783: 'You must know, in my way from J. Dixon's to Mr Montagu's, I laid a plan for my Indian tragedy, and not finding Mr M. at home I took possession of the

remnant of his old house and there drew it fairly out on paper; this employed me the day I waited for his return. When I got home from York I resumed my dramatic ideas, and have now, in the intervals I have snatched from making a new sunk fence, actually written the whole five acts, in my first and rough manner, which, though not legible to others, fully comprehend my whole design, and which, in my York residence, I think I shall be able to polish with ease. Though I have preserved the unities even to French exactitude, I think there will be incidents and bustle sufficient to satisfy English caprice. And as I had Mrs Siddons in my mind's eye all the time I was sketching my principal character, there turns out so much variety of passions in it that I believe nobody but her could perform it. . . . Stonehewer . . . has seen enough of both my works to augur the best concerning them' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 87-9). The play was apparently never acted either by Mrs Siddons or by any one else.

## TO MASON, Tuesday 30 December 1783

Printed from Mitford ii. 359-61. Clearly a reply to the preceding letter, although dated 'Dec. 3' in Mitford; date emended by Mrs Toynbee (N&Q 1900, 9th ser., vi. 483).

[Berkeley Square,] Dec. [30], 1783.

I CAN give you no clearer proof of my inclination to please you than by writing at present, when I have no inclination for it myself. It is not from bad health for I recovered it as soon as I came to town, the smoke of London agreeing better with me than keeping sheep on my hillock, but what can I write? Chaos you say is come again, yes truly, and Pope might add:

Joy to great chaos! let division reign!<sup>1</sup>

but I have no joy in such confusions as are occasioned by heraldic *counterchanges*.<sup>2</sup> It is playing at chess after jumbling all the pieces in a bag and placing them on the board indiscriminately, without separating the black from the white. Was I in the wrong to say that Lord Shelburne had disordered all system? Here are the Duke of Richmond and Mr Pitt in the arms of Jenkinson,<sup>3</sup> and Lord Bute and Lord Mansfield in opposition. Unravel and arrange all this if you can. I know but one way, which is to overlook the performers and adhere to the cause,<sup>4</sup> and then you will discern the principles which have forever produced parties. I mean the true, which being the true, are always assumed, though the professors may mean nothing but themselves. So much for politics which I should quit gladly, had I anything more amusing, or indeed anything else to tell you. It is scarce worth repeating that a person was with me yesterday who is concerned in a new and more compendious way of printing.<sup>5</sup> He told

1. *Dunciad* iv. 54.

2. Transpositions of tinctures.

3. Whom HW had described as 'Lord Bute's creature' and one of the King's secret junto (*Last Journals* i. 164, 415, and *passim*).

4. Opposition to the King's alleged unconstitutional extension of prerogative.

5. Perhaps Henry Johnson, author of *An Introduction to Logography: or, the Art of Arranging and Composing for Printing with Words Entire, Their Radices*

and Terminations, instead of Single Letters, 1783. The scheme led to other experiments: e.g., John Walter, *An Address to the Public by J. Walter, Showing the Great Improvement He Has Made in the Art of Printing, by Logographic Arrangements*, 'Printed at the Logographic Press,' 1789. This has a list of subscribers which includes HW and Sir Joseph Banks. On Johnson see C. H. Timperley, *Encyclopædia of Literary and Typographical Anecdote*, 1842, pp. 749-50.

me he had sent his plan to and then waited on a quondam friend of yours, a certain *toaster*,<sup>6</sup> who only said to him drily, 'Why did you send your book to me? I know nothing of printing.'

Yes! Yes! I have a better story for you. Washington has instituted a new military order, called of Cincinnatus. He sent it to La Fayette.<sup>7</sup> The Parisians cried, '*Diable St Senatus, voilà un plaisant Saint! qui est-ce qui en a jamais entendu parler?*' The *dévots* recurred to *Les Vies des Saints*, and finding no such apostle in the Church's red book, they are very angry with Washington for encroaching on the Pope's prerogative of creating peers of the Upper House; for my part I think they attributed a much better patron to the new order, than the pedantic one that Washington elected; nay and tallying much better. A senate, like many of the beatified, may set out very debauched and repent at last, and cast up its vomit and die a martyr at its *dissolution*.<sup>8</sup>

I now come to the pleasantest part of your letter, your tragedy. I rejoice that you are in earnest, and shall detest your toothache or any associable twitches still more if they interrupt the completion. I interest myself zealously in the dignity of your genius and wish you always to maintain, never to profane it. I do not mean that you should always be climbing the heights of Parnassus. You may sport in a valley with no less grace, but I will not allow you to hunt at Finsbury with lord mayors and aldermen.<sup>9</sup> Tragedy is worthy of you, yet why care whether your buskins would pass muster before a jury of French shoemakers? Do you want a licenser to usher your piece to the press with a *Par ordre de M. le Garde des Sceaux j'ai lu cette tragédie et je n'y ai rien trouvé qui doit en empêcher l'impression (La Harpe)*?<sup>10</sup>

6. Hurd (*ante* 9 June 1783), whose friendship with Mason was temporarily in eclipse (*Correspondence of Hurd and Mason*, ed. Whibley, Cambridge, 1932, p. 97).

7. The Society of the Cincinnati, an association of American and French officers who had served in the late war, was instituted in May 1783. On 18 Dec. 1783 Louis XVI had issued a decree permitting La Fayette and the other officers to accept the order (E. E. Hume, *La Fayette and the Society of the Cincinnati*, Baltimore, 1934, pp. 2-8).

8. The dissolution of Parliament that was expected (*ante* 25 Dec. 1783 and n. 6).

9. 'And givest such sarcenet surety for thy oaths

As if thou ne'er walk'st further than Finsbury'

(Hotspur in *Henry IV*, pt i, III. i. 254-5).

10. Such an *approbation du censeur* is imprinted at the end of most plays published at Paris during this period. The formula varies in wording, and the authorizing official is sometimes 'Monseigneur le Garde des Sceaux,' sometimes 'Monseigneur le Lieutenant-Général de Police,' and sometimes 'Monseigneur le Vice-Chancelier.' The censor in 1783 seems to have been Jean-Baptiste-Antoine Suard (NBG xliv. 606 n. 2, and plays dated 1782 and 1787). Jean-François de la Harpe (1739-1803), the dramatist and critic,

Don't make it too horrid neither, that it may be licensed at Athens. I was glad to plead the atrociousness of the one stage to shelter myself from the impertinent delicacy of the other;<sup>11</sup> but I shall indulge you in no extremes, you possess the whole art and can do what you please: can touch a precipice, and glide down so imperceptibly that your descent shall appear natural and easy; while we the less skilful neither know how we got up nor how to come down: and then assure folks that certain Greeks two thousand years ago broke their necks with as little address, and were mightily admired for it. I require a perfect tragedy at your hands with no excesses in the construction, for all the rest I am in no pain: nor should be on that head had you not alarmed me. Mrs Siddons whom I have seen again, and like much better,<sup>12</sup> though in that detestable play *The Gamester*,<sup>13</sup> shall do you justice, and Lord Harcourt will be in the third heaven between her and you.<sup>14</sup> Good night.

### From MASON, Wednesday 28 January 1784

Printed for the first time from MS now wsl. It was found among the Bentley papers.

*Address:* The Honourable Horace Walpole, Berkley Square, London.

*Postmark:* YORK 31 JA.

On the back are some partly illegible pencil-notes by HW for his reply, *post* 2 Feb.

seems never to have been censor, but HW probably used his name because he was 'regardé alors (vers 1784) assez généralement comme l'oracle du goût' (Gabriel Peignot, *Recherches . . . sur la vie et les ouvrages de M. de la Harpe*, Dijon, 1820, p. 88 n. 2).

11. In his Postscript to *The Mysterious Mother* HW wrote: 'The subject is more truly horrid than even that of Ædipus: and yet I do not doubt but a Grecian poet would have made no scruple of exhibiting it on the theatre;' and again, 'Our genius and cast of thinking are very different from the French; and yet our theatre . . . depends almost entirely at present on translations and copies from our neighbours. Enslaved as they are to rules and modes, still I do not doubt but many both of their tragic and comic authors

would be glad they dared to use the liberties that are secured to our stage' (*Works* i. 125-9).

12. Than when he first saw her; see *ante* ꝑca 21 Jan. 1783 and HW to Lady Ossory 3 Nov. 1782.

13. A domestic tragedy by Edward Moore (1712-57), acted at Drury Lane 22 Nov. 1783 (Genest vi. 296) with Mrs Siddons as Mrs Beverley. It was first played at Drury Lane 7 Feb. 1753 (*ibid.* iv. 359). Allardyce Nicoll calls it 'a truly excellent prose drama' (*A History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama 1750-1800*, Cambridge, 1927, p. 88).

14. It was at Nuneham that Mason first made Mrs Siddons's acquaintance (Thomas Campbell, *Life of Mrs Siddons*, 1834, ii. 63-5).

'I meddle with no man's politics but my own, first because I . . . have nothing . . . do . . . dictate . . . I cannot know any man's motives and . . . but my own, nor whether interested.

Like to be consistent . . . principle.

Don't underst[and] distinguish[ing] between K[ing] and C[rown].'

Jan. 28th, 1784.

YOU will not, I hope, have thought my silence too long at present, as the melancholy event in your family<sup>1</sup> must have employed much of your time and thoughts, and as you would not expect from me, who knew so little of Sir Edward, that sort of letter which is usually written on such occasions. I cannot, however, now be quite silent on the subject as I have heard a rumour that your finances are likely to be considerably affected<sup>2</sup> by his death, which though I am certain will affect you less than it would do any other person, yet I cannot help wishing to know that the report is false; or if true, lessened in degree. Because it is those persons only who value money that I would wish should be deprived of it, were I to wish that your riches should increase in proportion to the little love you have for them (which I think when I was in college I was taught to call an inverse ratio) you would be rich indeed. If this sentence be so very nonsensical that you cannot understand it, do not rashly blame me, but doubt first with yourself if there may not be some puzzle in your unmathematical cranium. All I mean is, that as you do not love money I wish you to enjoy it in that degree which nobody who loves it can.

I rather expected to have heard something from you about Lord Harcourt's turning courtier.<sup>3</sup> But as you told me in your last that Lord Shelbourne had disordered all system I suppose you lay this event

1. HW's brother, Sir Edward Walpole, died 12 Jan. 1784.

2. See HW's reply, *post* 2 Feb. 1784.

3. On 19 Jan. 1784 Mason had written Harcourt: 'I have not been better pleased a great while than with the news which I received the last post from Mr Duncombe, that your Lordship had been at Court. In taking this step I think you have acted in perfect consistency with yourself, and have shown the world that you have a mind superior to little self-considerations . . . when one part of the Constitution [the Crown] is so manifestly in danger. That the two other parts [Parliament and the people] were before in

danger from this which you now support, your Lordship and I have been long agreed, and have in our different spheres acted accordingly, in consequence of which we have been called republicans and what not, but we have only smiled at the accusation; and now, when your Lordship will be called a King's friend, you will only smile on . . .' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 91). Lord and Lady Harcourt had not gone to Court since the late Earl's death in 1777. The reasons for their not going and for their return at the end of 1783 are discussed by HW in the following letter.

to that cause. If you will suffer me to add to Lord Shelbourne's name that of the coalition I shall join you in sentiment, but as I cannot help thinking the coalition the principal cause, I must needs say I greatly approve what he has done. I think he has shown himself the Crown's friend, which I hold to be a sort of friendship very different from Lord Denbigh's,<sup>4</sup> and I rather think there will arise a new set of men under that title, at least there ought.

I know all this time I am writing what you will not approve, but yet I know you will like me the better for declaring my sentiments than for concealing them. Our correspondence has always had that liberal turn, and I hope will long continue to have it.

I have finished my tragedy except a few polishing touches, which I shall not give it till it has lain by me for some time and when I can read it with new eyes. I do not believe you will like it better than you did *Argentile and Curan*,<sup>5</sup> yet this I know, I shall heartily forgive you if you do not. I writ it to complete my dramatic plans. I have already published two on the old Greek model, and I have now by me one on the old English, another on the modern Italian<sup>5a</sup> and this last on the French. But with all of them I have taken such liberties as I did with the Greek and have adapted them as much as I could to English taste, or what would be English taste if such a thing might be supposed to exist at present. *Dic mihi quid melius desidiosus agam?*<sup>6</sup> and believe me

Very cordially yours,

W. MASON<sup>7</sup>

## TO MASON, Monday 2 February 1784

Printed from Mitford ii. 363-7; collated with two MS copies in HW's hand, each containing a different set of notes by HW.

4. In his note on Mason's *Heroic Epistle*, l. 126, HW called him 'a most worthless tool and spy of Lord Bute and the Court' (Mason's *Satirical Poems* 69).

5. Mentioned *ante* 24 Aug. 1772, but HW expresses no opinion of it.

5a. *Argentile and Curan*, and *Sappho* (*ante* i. 43, 342).

6. 'Tell me how one as idle as I might do better' (paraphrased from Martial VIII. iii. 12).

7. Below the signature HW has written, '—So the flatterer sings  
In notes best suited to the ears of kings"  
(Mason's *Fresnoy*).'

The lines are an interpolation by Mason near the end of his translation (1783) of Dufresnoy's *Art of Painting*, ll. 781-2 (Mason's *Works* iii. 75). HW, quoting from memory, has paraphrased slightly: 'In strains best suited to the ear of kings.'

Copy 1, headed by HW 'Copy of an answer to the Reverend Mr W. Mason,' contains notes by HW that are now first printed. The MS was among the Bentley papers acquired by WSL in 1937.

Copy 2, headed by HW 'My answer to the Reverend William Mason,' was collated with Mitford's (or Cunningham's) text by Mrs Toynbee (xiii. 124-9), but she did not print HW's commentary that is here appended; it is printed in Lady Theresa Lewis, *Extracts from the Journals and Correspondence of Miss Berry*, 1865, ii. 39-40, and (abridged) in *Harcourt Papers*, iii. 169-71. The MS, formerly owned by Sir T. V. Lister, is now in the Pierpont Morgan Library.

What seems to be HW's first intemperate draft of a reply to Mason's letter of 28 Jan. 1784 is printed in Appendix 1.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 2,<sup>1</sup> 1784.

**I** THANK you for your condolence on the death of my brother,<sup>2</sup> and on the considerable diminution of my own fortune; though neither are events to which I am not perfectly reconciled. My brother was 77, had enjoyed perfect health and senses to that age, did not even begin to break till last August, suffered no pain, saw death advance gradually though fast, with the coolest tranquillity, did not even wish to live longer and died both with indifference and without affectation; is that a termination to lament?

I do lose fourteen hundred a year by his death<sup>3</sup>—but had I reason to expect to keep it so long? I had twice been offered the reversion<sup>4</sup> for

1. '2d' (copy 1, 2).

2. 'Sir Edward Walpole' (HW).

3. 'Mr W. enjoyed about three parts of the place of collector of the Customs, given by George I to Sir Rob. Walpole for his own and the lives of his two elder sons, which grant expired on the death of Sir Edward' (HW). HW's income from this place came to £1000 a year, plus the surplus, £800, which he divided with Sir Edward ('Short Notes,' GRAY i. 15).

4. 'By Henry Lord Holland, and Lord North' (HW). In his *Memoirs* for 1762 HW wrote, retrospectively, 'I had, soon after my appearance in the world, lived in much intimacy with Fox. . . . As his character opened more to the world, I declined any connection with him in politics. . . . When he united [1754] with the Duke of Newcastle, he had offered, in truth slightly enough, to procure the reversion of a considerable place, which I hold only for my brother's life, to be confirmed for my own, provided I should be

upon good terms with the Duke. I had ever, in the most open manner, spoken of that minister with contempt: and having to this hour never received a favour from any minister, I shall be believed that I would accept none from Fox. I answered accordingly with much scorn, "I will not accept that reversion from the Duke"' (*Mem. Geo. III.* i. 166-7). The offer from Lord North was made 31 Oct. 1775 through Col. Whithed Keene. 'I was much pleased with this offer, as I knew it was made in hopes of my persuading Mr Conway to vote with the ministry against America, and gave me the opportunity of showing him how disinterested my sentiments were, and as it proved to me how much they [the ministers] were hurt by his opposition' (*Last Journals* i. 488-9). In 1751-2 HW had solicited the reversion from Pelham on the urging of 'two or three of my best friends' ('Account of My Conduct,' *Works* ii. 366-7). His persistence on that occasion is considerably under-

my own life, and positively refused to accept it, because I would receive no obligation that might entangle my honour and my gratitude,<sup>5</sup> and set them at variance. I never did ask or receive a personal favour from my own most intimate friends<sup>6</sup> when in power, though they were too upright to have laid me under the same difficulties, and have always acted an uniform and honest part;<sup>7</sup> but though I love expense, I was content with a fortune far above any merit I can pretend to, and knew I should be content with it<sup>8</sup> were it much lessened. As it would be contemptible to regret the diminution at 66, there is no merit in being quite easy under the loss. But you do me honour I do not deserve in complimenting me on not loving money. I have always loved what money would purchase, which is much the same thing; and the whole of my philosophy consists in reconciling myself to buying fewer baubles for a year or two that I may live, and when the old child's baby-house is quite full of playthings.

I am surprised that you expected me to take notice of Lord Harcourt's<sup>9</sup> turning courtier. It did not astonish me in the least,<sup>10</sup> as I have known for near two years<sup>11</sup> that such an event was by no means improbable, and did myself try to contribute to it when<sup>12</sup> I thought it not at all irreconcilable with his former conduct.<sup>13</sup> Nor do I wonder at your announcing in effect the same of yourself. Were I surprised, I should contradict one of my own maxims which I have scarce or never known to fail, and<sup>14</sup> which is, that men are always most angry with those with whom they quarrel last, which produces<sup>15</sup> reconciliations between those whose hatreds<sup>16</sup> agree *in eodem tertio*.

stated in the 'Account'; see Henry Fox to HW 23 Nov. and HW to Pelham 25 Nov. 1752.

5. 'my honour and gratitude' (copy 1).

6. 'my most intimate friends' (copy 2). 'Particularly General Conway, secretary of state in 1766, and commander-in-chief in 1782' (HW).

7. 'uniform honest part' (copy 1): 'honest uniform part' (copy 2).

8. 'with it' omitted in copies.

9. 'George Simon 2d Earl of Harcourt, who had been a warm republican' (HW).

10. 'surprise me in the least' (copy 1).

11. 'these two years' (copy 1).

12. 'In 1782, when Lord Rockingham, the D. of Richmond, Gen. Conway, the Cavendishes and other Whigs, with whom

Lord Harcourt had constantly acted in Opposition, came into place' (HW).

13. See HW's commentary appended to this letter.

14. 'and' omitted in copy 1.

15. 'which generally produces' (copy 1, 2).

16. 'Mr Mason, who hated the King, had, with Mr Wyvill, been the institutor of the Yorkshire Association, who to lessen the influence of the Crown, had set on foot a plan for changing the mode of choosing representatives for the House of Commons. Lord North had opposed that scheme and contributed to its rejection, which Mr Mason resented, and was the cause of his inveteracy to the coalition of Lord North and Mr Fox. Young Mr W.



But in truth I concern myself in<sup>17</sup> no man's politics but my own; first, because I have no more right to dictate to others, than I allow anybody to dictate to me: and secondly, because I can see into no heart but my own, nor know its real motives of action. My own point has been to be consistent ever since I first thought on politics, which was five and forty years ago; and I feel a satisfaction in having been so steady, because it seems to me, if I do not deceive or flatter myself, that it is a proof that I have acted on principle, and not from disappointment,<sup>18</sup> resentment, passion, interest, or fickleness.

It made me smile indeed when I heard that Lord Harcourt on his change had given away his ring of Brutus<sup>19</sup> to Lady Jersey's little boy,<sup>20</sup> because I do not see how anything that has happened within this twelvemonth has affected the character of Brutus, who died seventeen hundred years before the *coalition*<sup>21</sup> was thought on—I am glad however that if I<sup>22</sup> change, I may keep my Caligula<sup>23</sup> without committing treason.

Your distinction of *the Crown's friends* is, I own, too theologic a refinement for my simple understanding, who never conceived a confusion of two natures in one person, yet still remaining separate. Nor in human affairs should I comprehend why a pope's disgracing himself as a gentleman by the meanest duplicity<sup>24</sup> should make one

Pitt having been an advocate for that reform, Mr Mason had addressed a very cold ode to him—soon after that, Mr Pitt becoming chancellor of the Exchequer under Lord Shelburne, who pretended to countenance the Parliamentary reform in compliment to the Yorkshire Association, who were opposed by Lord Rockingham and Lord John Cavendish, Mr Pitt was so feebly a supporter of their plan, that they were offended at him; but as he was now in 1784 become the great enemy of Mr Fox and Lord North, Mason again hoped for his support to his darling reform' (HW).

17. 'with' (copy 2).

18. 'Mr Mason had flattered himself, I believe, that by the interest of his patron Lord Holderness, governor of the Prince of Wales, he should be appointed preceptor. This was probably the source of his hatred to the King' (HW).

19. 'Lord Harcourt had a ring of Brutus with the daggers and ides of March' (HW).

20. George Villiers (later Child-Villiers) (1773–1859), styled Vct Villiers until 1805; 5th E of Jersey, 1805.

21. 'The coalition of Lord North and Charles Fox' (HW). These four words are not underlined in HW's copies.

22. 'I' is underlined in copy 1.

23. 'Mr W[alpole] had a fine small antique bust of Caligula in bronze' (HW). It was a present from Mann ('Des. of SH,' *Works* ii. 480; HW to Mann 30 May 1767); sold SH xv. 68.

24. 'Alluding to the King's scandalous duplicity on Mr Fox's India Bill at the end of 1783, which he had suffered to be settled in council and to pass the House of Commons without expressing a syllable against it—yet then (still without acquainting his ministers) sent for Lord Temple and authorized him to declare publicly that his Majesty would regard as enemies whoever should vote for the bill; and he commanded his own lords of the Bedchamber to break their words and engage-

fall in love with his tiara. Do you think I should accept it<sup>25</sup> for sound reasoning if you<sup>26</sup> were capable of telling me, that, though you vowed in a sermon that you would never be a bishop,<sup>27</sup> yet your gown being distinct from you, you could see no reason why your gown *ought*<sup>28</sup> not to be turned into lawn sleeves?

What miracles the new set of men<sup>29</sup> that are to arise, are to achieve, I neither know nor care; I shall be out of the question before that blessed millennium arrives—unless they are already come, as perhaps they are<sup>30</sup>—and for that too, I cannot have long to care; though I firmly believe that your *new set* will only effect what has often been tried before, and what you say *ought* to be tried, i.e. to prove themselves *the Crown's friends*, an act of honest<sup>31</sup> loyalty which I dare to say the wearer will be the first to forgive.<sup>32</sup>

You see by my using the same liberality of correspondence, I approve of yours. I am above disguising my sentiments, and am too low for any man to disguise his to me.<sup>33</sup> Mine indeed, having no variety in them, must be less entertaining; and therefore, unless I take a freak of hobbling to Court, you can have no curiosity to hear them. Nor should I have mentioned them now, but that I thought it respectful to you, and candid, when you communicated your new<sup>34</sup> sentiments to me, to tell you that mine remained unaltered.<sup>35</sup>

ments and oppose the bill. These violent acts of falsehood and unconstitutional influence Mr Mason and Lord Harcourt chose as the moment for becoming *Friends to the Crown*' (HW).

25. 'it' omitted in copy 2.

26. 'you' underlined in copy 1.

27. 'Mr Mason in the height of his opposition declared in a sermon preached in the cathedral of York that he would never be a bishop. He was going to print it, but Mr W[alpole] dissuaded him' (HW). See *ante* 13 March 1778. A 1784 print satirizing Pitt's adherents shows Mason's name on a shield bearing a bishop's mitre (BM, *Satiric Prints* vi. 75-6).

28. 'might' (copy 2).

29. '*the New Set of Men*' (copy 1, 2).

30. 'Mr W. Pitt and the new ministers, who succeeded the Duke of Portland, Mr Fox and Lord North' (HW).

31. 'honest' omitted in copy 2.

32. 'pardon' (copy 1, 2).

33. 'Intimating that Mr Mason would

not have been so frank in declaring his versatility, if Mr W[alpole]'s friends had not been in disgrace' (HW).

34. '*new*' (copy 2).

35. 'The whole scope of the letter [Mason's letter of 28 Jan.] was mean. Mason, proud of having drawn Lord Harcourt into his enmity to the coalition, was disappointed that Mr W[alpole] did not complain; and could not help exulting thus on that occasion. Mr W. who had known for two years the extreme impatience of Lord and Lady Harcourt for a place, and who saw with contempt the great lengths they went now to pay their court, was pleased at Mason's silly vanity which gave Mr W. this opportunity of laughing at the inconsistency of both Lord Harcourt and Mason. The latter was a wretched politician, yet was vainer of that quality than of being so great a poet, which had early made Mr W. write this couplet, "If I could be Dryden, I would not be Jack of Leyden!"—Mason ought to have recol-

I cannot imagine<sup>36</sup> why you think that I shall not like your tragedy; am I apt to dislike your writings? Though I am too sincere to flatter you when I think you unequal to yourself, I did reckon that I was one who had taste enough to be sensible to the utmost of the beauties of your capital works. Tragedy<sup>37</sup> is certainly not a walk in which I can believe you will miss your way; you have trodden more difficult paths with the happiest facility. I shall be glad to see your piece when you will indulge me with it. I am<sup>38</sup>

Yours ever,

H. W.

PS.<sup>39</sup> Mr Jerningham has just published a new poem on the doctrines of the Scandinavian bards.<sup>40</sup> It is far superior to his other works. The versification is good; very many expressions and lines beautiful, and the whole nervous and not like his uniform turtleditties. It might have been thrown into a better plan; and it ends rather abruptly and tamely. He seems to have kept *The Descent of Odin* in his eye, though he had not the art of conjuring up the most forceful feelings as Gray has done in a subject in which there is so much of the terrible. Though one has scarce any idea of what the whole is about, yet one is enrapt by it, as one is delighted with *The Flower and Leaf*<sup>41</sup> though a mere description of ladies in white velvet and green satin set with rubies and emeralds, and holding wands of *agnus castus*.

#### Explanation of Mr W.'s letter to Mr M.<sup>42</sup>

Mr Mason, G. S. Earl of Harcourt and Mr H. Walpole were intimate friends and agreed in condemning the K[ing]'s measures. But at the end of the year 1783, when Mr Ch[arles] Fox produced his famous E. India bill,

lected that Dryden after writing *The Spanish Friar*, turned renegade and wrote *The Hind and Panther!*' (HW). The couplet was inserted in the unsent draft of Walpole's letter of 8 Nov. 1783.

36. 'conceive' (copy 2).

37. 'capital works—and tragedy' (copy 1, 2).

38. 'with it; and am' (copy 1, 2).

39. The postscript does not appear in either of HW's MS copies.

40. *The Rise and Progress of the Scandi-*

*navian Poetry, a Poem in Two Parts*, 1784.

41. The anonymous fifteenth-century poem, formerly attributed to Chaucer, modernized by Dryden in his *Fables*.

42. HW's heading for his commentary written at the end of copy 2 of the letter of 2 Feb. 1784 (see preliminary note). Both the contents and the handwriting of this 'Explanation' show that it was written at a later date than the notes in copy 1, although the copies themselves may have been made at about the same time.

Mr Mason and Lord Harcourt, without even the slightest hint to Mr Walpole, changed sides totally, and though Mr W. dined with the Earl in private but the very day before Lord H. voted against that bill, he did not drop a syllable of his intention, nor of his design of going to Court, which he had not done for some years—yet he had acquainted Mr Mason, or rather I believe had been persuaded by him secretly to take those steps<sup>43</sup>; and when they were taken, Mr Mason wrote an authoritative letter to Mr Walpole approving that conduct, and presumptuously flattering himself even without giving any reason for their total tergiversation, that he should influence Mr Walpole to take the same part.<sup>44</sup> Mr W. thought it became him to treat such treacherous and impertinent behaviour as it deserved, and to let Mr M. see, that with all his admiration of Mr Mason's satiric abilities in poetry, Mr W. neither feared his anger, nor would suffer him to govern his principles. Mr W.'s answer received none, and though Mr M. continued to visit him for a year or two,<sup>45</sup> a total coolness ensued, and all correspondence by letters ceased. Lady Harcourt, who during Lord Rockingham's short administration had overwhelmed Mr W. with letters, two or three in a day,<sup>46</sup> to get her Lord a place, which he had tried in vain, was made lady of the Bedchamber,<sup>47</sup> and she and her Lord became a proverb even to courtiers, of the most servile attachment to their Majesties, though both had forsworn St James's, on the King's and Queen's neglect of them on the unfortunate death of the Earl's father,<sup>48</sup> and his Lordship, besides wearing a ring of Brutus with the daggers and ides of March, had given away the portraits of King and Queen, their presents to the late Earl. Mr Mason had preached a sermon at York against the Archbishop, in which he declared he never would be a bishop, and was going to print it, but had been dissuaded by Mr Walpole from making such a rash vow in print. Mr Mason hated Lord Rockingham and Mr Fox.

43. In his memoirs for 10 Jan. 1784 HW wrote that Harcourt was 'swayed by Duke of Richmond' to return to Court.

44. HW apparently thought that Mason implied this in the last sentence of the second paragraph of his letter of 28 Jan. 1784.

45. That is, when he came to London or Nuneham he paid visits to HW.

46. No letters from Lady Harcourt to HW have been found. HW's letter to Lady Harcourt of 27 March 1782, the day Rockingham took office as first lord of the Treasury, shows that she had written HW more than one note that day concerning a place for Lord Harcourt. In a MS comment (*Harcourt Papers* iii. 173-4) on HW's letter she said that HW had asked

her 'opinion' on the subject, which 'agreed with his,' and therefore HW solicited a place for Harcourt from the Duke of Richmond.

47. On 7 Aug. 1784, in place of the Duchess of Argyll, resigned (GM 1784, liv pt ii. 638). The fact that HW does not also mention Harcourt's appointment as Master of the Horse to the Queen in 1790 indicates that the 'Explanation' was written before that year.

48. In 1777. Lady Harcourt in her comment on HW's letter of 27 March 1782 says that Lord Harcourt 'in the year 1783 . . . returned to Court, from whence he had absented himself for six years' (*Harcourt Papers* iii. 174).

The K[ing] had approved of and encouraged the D. of Portland and Mr Fox on their India bill, and then commanded even the lords of his own Bedchamber to vote against it.<sup>49</sup>

Mr W. has a very fine antique bust in bronze of Caligula.

The Opposition had for many years complained of that knot of devotees to the Court, who affected to call themselves the King's friends; and nobody *had been* more determined against them than Lord Harcourt and Mason.

Mr Pitt when in opposition had supported Mason's and Wyvill's project of altering the representation of Parl. and Mason no doubt expected would promote it when become minister—but he disappointed him: and Mr Pitt on the contrary gave a capital blow to the House of Commons, by maintaining himself by the prerogative against a majority of that House,<sup>50</sup> which proved that Mr W. had foreseen rightly of the new set of men.

Mason's capital work indisputably was the *Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers*.

## TO MASON, November 1788

Missing. Mason wrote to Harcourt 20 Nov. 1788: 'I sit mighty easy to what either the real world or the printed *World* may think or write either about myself or my productions. It will however amuse you to know how one person in the world thinks or rather writes concerning my late publication, and therefore I send you a transcript. When you have read it, I fancy you will be of the same opinion with me, that it cost the writer, short as it is, more time to compose, than a letter of a sheet would to any other person. And indeed I know no species of composition so difficult as that is, which says *nothing* under the appearance of *something*, and a writer of Hieroglyphic Tales is the only person who can suc-

49. Fox wrote, 'We are beat in the House of Lords, by such treachery on the part of the King, and such meanness on the part of his *friends* in the House of Lords, as one could not expect either from him or them' (Charles James Fox, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, ed. Lord John Russell, 1853-7, ii. 221). 'Never did George III intervene more openly in politics than on this occasion' (A. S. Turberville, *The House of Lords in the Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, 1927, p. 412).

50. On 16 Jan. 1784 the House of Commons had adopted a resolution expressing lack of confidence in Pitt's administration,

but Pitt refused to resign (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiv. 360-80, 450-1 n.). HW wrote in his memoirs for 29 Jan. 1784, 'Fox then on the state of the nation again declared against Pitt's staying in place. . . . Pitt . . . defied them to impeach or address. . . . Pitt's behaviour was entirely prerog[ative], though his difficulty might be, that he knew King would not yield if he did resign, or had tied him by promise [? not] to resign; yet this is being exceedingly candid to allow him that motive, for his whole behaviour was insolent.' The speeches on 29 Jan. are reported in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiv. 437-49.

ceed in such a mode of writing. The recipe for heartburn lozenges [also missing] I hope you will find a more valuable appendix' (MS in the possession of Lord Harcourt). The 'late publication' was Mason's *Secular Ode in Commemoration of the Glorious Revolution, 1688*, published 5 Nov. 1788 (Gaskell 36). The *World* for 11 Nov., after remarking that 'there is scarcely one line with any imagination or effect,' quotes one stanza as being 'the least indifferent, though the better part is from Pope's *Cecilia*.'

### From MASON, Tuesday 15 March 1796

Printed from MS now wsl. First printed in Toynbee *Supp.* ii. 188-90. MS bequeathed by Mrs Damer to Sir Wathen Waller, 1st Bt; sold Sotheby's 5 Dec. 1921 (Waller sale), lot 40 (with Mason's letters to HW of 1 Aug. 1756 and 24 March 1796, and HW's letter to Mason of ca April 1778), to Maggs; offered separately in Maggs Cat. No. 439 (1923), lot 868; bought by wsl from Maggs, March 1925.

Aston near Rotherham, March 15th, '96.

My Lord,

A FRIEND<sup>1</sup> of your Lordship's and mine and of Mr Gray's sent me by the last post an extract of what he says is a very long poem<sup>2</sup> by the author of *The Landscape*,<sup>3</sup> the principles of which have been so completely confuted by various hands,<sup>4</sup> that I should have imagined he would ere this have felt the less than mediocrity of his talents, and have forborne to trouble the public with any more of his trash. The extract, which I have before me, contains only six lines<sup>5</sup> of his last production, taken from the very first page, which contain so much rash scepticism, if not worse, plainly declaring that, in his opinion, none but *learned fools* would *decide* that there was a *God*, that it moved my indignation. And when I was told also that the thing was wished to be considered as a continuation of our friend's

1. Probably Stenhewer.

2. *The Progress of Civil Society*, 1796.

3. Richard Payne Knight (1750-1824), numismatist and antiquary, had published in 1794 a didactic poem on gardening called *The Landscape*.

4. E.g., William Marshall's *Review of the Landscape*, 1795, and the reviews in the *Monthly Review*, 2d series, May 1794, xiv. 78-82 and in the *Critical Review*, 2d series, July 1795, xiv. 315-9.

5. 'Whether in fate's eternal fetters  
bound,  
Mechanic nature goes her endless  
round;  
Or, ever varying, acts but to fulfill  
The sovereign mandates of almighty  
will?—  
Let learned folly seek, or foolish  
pride,  
Rash in presumptuous ignorance, de-  
cide'  
(*The Progress of Civil Society*, i. 9-14).

fine fragment on education and civil government,<sup>6</sup> I became still more indignant. For I could not bear to think that Gray, who thought like Montesquieu upon those subjects,<sup>7</sup> should be brought into company with that madman Lucretius.<sup>8</sup> However I slept well, as (God be thanked) I usually do, and this very morning awaking, a few thoughts struck me, which I have thrown into the form of a sonnet, and which I herewith present to your Lordship. More just satire than could be comprised in that confined species of composition I conclude you would think *powder thrown away*.

If therefore, my Lord, you approve it, I wish you either to print and publish it with my name, or in any other way fully to disseminate it, as your Lordship shall think proper. For surely no quarter ought to be given to your *soi-disant* gentlemen scribblers of such vile principles.

Your Lordship may perhaps recollect, that some years ago we differed in opinion about a Parliamentary reform, but I am convinced, that if an *Association*<sup>9</sup> was now formed (much different from that of the present Whig Club<sup>10</sup>) to petition the House of Commons to exclude, instead of rotten boroughs, men of such rotten principles as this writer's, we should both of us very cordially give it our signature. Whether the present author represents such a borough,<sup>11</sup> or holds it in fee, I know not; but this I know, that his principles ought to be exposed before the next general election, that such honest freeholders, who detest the French Jacobins, may be led to make it a point of conscience not to vote for him; for in one of the worst parts

6. 'The completion of my plan has obliged me to follow Mr Gray on a subject which has . . . supplied him with materials for the most splendid passage of his most splendid fragment on education and government' (ibid. 111 n.). Gray's fragmentary poem, 'The Alliance of Education and Government,' was first printed by Mason in *Mem. Gray* 193-200.

7. Gray expressed his admiration for Montesquieu's *Esprit des lois* in his letter to Wharton of 9 March 1749 (*Gray's Corr.* i. 316-7).

8. 'The learned reader will perceive, that the general design of the following work is taken from the latter part of the fifth book of Lucretius' (*The Progress of Civil Society*, p. v).

9. The Yorkshire Committee of Association had been dissolved in 1784 (Wyvill, *Political Papers* i. p. i).

10. A club within a club, meeting at Brooks's, led by and devoted to the principles of Fox, at this time in political eclipse.

11. Knight was M.P. for Ludlow borough 1784-1806, of which the representation was quasi-hereditary in the Herbert-Clive family. Ludlow was not disfranchised in 1832, but in 1867 its representation was reduced to one member, and in 1885 the remaining seat was merged in the county of Shropshire (Lewis B. Namier, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*, 1929, ii. 301).

of their worst of characters he clearly fraternizes with them. This the six lines I have seen clearly evince, and I wish to read no more. I have the honour to be with true respect, my Lord,

Your Lordship's veteran correspondent and devoted servant,

W. MASON

N.B. I have no objection against this letter being printed quasi *Epistle Prefatory*. It cannot properly be called a Dedication because there is no flattery in it.

To the Earl of Orford, etc., etc.

Sonnet

on hearing that a long poem was lately published presuming to be a continuation of Mr Gray's fragment on education, etc.

Old as we are, that wight we need not fear,  
 Who dares debase the sterling sense of Gray  
 With his vile trash, and, by such light allay,  
 Hope to buy off the critic's frown severe.  
 He sings too!!! So, when twilight dims the sphere,  
 The raven hoarse, blind owl, and mimic jay  
 Croak, hoot, and chatter o'er the flowery spray,  
 Where Philomel attunes her descant clear.  
 Methinks I see our friend, by Fancy's eye,  
 Throned on a cloud in yon cerulean plain  
 'Smiling in scorn';<sup>12</sup> methinks I hear him cry,  
 'Rude rhymer, cease! nor meanly try to drain  
 The filthy dregs of Epicurus' sty;  
 Thy hog-wash shall not mix with my champagne.'

W. Mason

Aston, March 15th, 1796.

12. 'Now smiling as in scorn' (*Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, l. 105).



## TO MASON, Saturday 19 March 1796

Printed from Mitford ii. 368-9.

Berkeley Square, March 19, 1796.

Dear Sir,

I WAS rejoiced to see your hand again, though I am not yet able to answer it with mine, but I will as soon as I can scrawl out a letter which you will be able to read and which has not been possible for me to do these fifteen weeks: I have had a very bad fit of the gout for fifteen weeks in every limb. I still cannot walk across my room, but held up by two or three servants, and have to this moment five or six orifices venting chalk in one finger of my right hand, which is dressed every day by a surgeon; besides all this, I was very near going off towards the beginning of my illness by an inflammation in my bowels.<sup>1</sup>

I am ashamed to trouble you with all this, especially when I was eager to thank you and reply particularly to your letter—that I must contrive to do myself,<sup>2</sup> being happy that your sentiments agree so much with mine on the particular subject of your letter, though some singular circumstances, which I will explain at large,<sup>3</sup> and which are well known to Lord Harcourt and Mr Frederic Montagu will prevent my going farther than I have already done, though that has not been moderately neither, for I have been full as much offended as you are, and will point out to you more rocks of offence than you yet know, not forgetting the former subject.

This is all I can say till I can explain myself more at large, which I will do as fast as my weakness and miserable hand will let me. In the mean time I am with great sincerity and cordiality, dear Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

ORFORD

1. HW describes his illness in more detail to Lady Ossory 14 Feb. 1796.

2. I.e., with his own hand.

3. He does so *post* 22 March 1796.

TO MASON, Tuesday 22 March 1796

Printed from Mitford ii. 369-72.

Berkeley Square, March 22, 1796.

Dear Sir,

I COULD not without using too many words express to you how very much I am offended and disgusted by Mr Knight's new insolent and self-conceited poem; considering to what *height* he dares to carry his impious attack, it might be sufficient to lump all the rest of his impertinent sallies in one mass of censure as trifling peccadillos; but as you and I are personally interested to resent the liberties he has taken with our late great and respectable friend, I must if I can get through this letter enter more minutely into some detail.

The vanity of supposing that his authority, the authority of such a trumpery prosaic poetaster as Mr Knight,<sup>1</sup> was sufficient to re-establish the superannuated atheism of Lucretius, by his! His presuming to pronounce him the best of the Roman poets<sup>2</sup> just as he allots the same rank to Sheridan over Gray and our first bards<sup>3</sup> was I believe partly intended to establish a precedent for scores of his own wretched lines full of tautology, void of novelty, and his descriptions spun out to tediousness. In one respect he has executed justice on himself by his audacity in polluting Gray's *champagne* and Heliconian element with his hog-wash: who that sips the latter after tasting the other can help rinsing his mouth? Nor is this his only violation of our immortal friend's ashes. He tells a silly falsehood of Gray being terrified from writing by Lloyd's and Colman's trash,<sup>4</sup> that was squirted from the kennel against you both, forgetting (though affecting to revere Gray) the excellent letter to you on that occasion,

1. HW repeated his strictures on Knight's literary work to Joseph Farington in July 1796 (DALRYMPLE 329).

2. 'Lucretius is, in my opinion, the great poet of the Latin language' (*The Progress of Civil Society*, p. v).

3. 'Johnson, Goldsmith, Churchill, Gray, and Chatterton, were all, in a great measure, lost to the Muses for want of proper encouragement; and a still greater genius, who is now living, has sacrificed poetry to politics; in which . . . he will have the mortification to find, that the

cringing servility of a drudge in office, is a more effective recommendation to places of power and emolument, than all the splendours of the sublimest eloquence' (ibid. 120 n.).

4. 'Mr Lloyd who wrote *The Actor*, and other trifling poems, published some burlesque parodies of some of Mr Gray's *Odes*, which, added to some coarse sarcasms of Dr Johnson, prevented him from writing any more' (ibid. 65 n.). For a note on Lloyd's and Colman's *Two Odes* see *ante* 14 April 1775.

about *combustling*,<sup>5</sup> derisory enough to have stopped their writing any more, instead of their checking him.

I could make fifty other objections to this pretended and ill-warranted dictator to<sup>6</sup> all taste, who Jacobinically would level the purity of gardens, would as malignantly as Tom Paine or Priestley guillotine Mr Brown,<sup>7</sup> and who to give a specimen of his own genius for gardening, the Lord knows how connected! has given in his *Landscape* an ugly clumsy Etruscan brass milk-pot as a model of the line of beauty.<sup>8</sup>

Notwithstanding all I have said, I cannot engage in an open war with him and beg not to be named in it. He is a great favourite of a very near relation of mine<sup>9</sup> and intimate friend with whom I have already had a warm altercation, and whom I should mortally disoblige, and through whom I have received several civilities from the person himself.<sup>10</sup> I am besides too frank and open, and too much pleased and honoured by the revival of our correspondence to have any mean *reserve* with you, and therefore I acknowledge to you that weak and broken as I am and tottering to the grave at some months past seventy-eight,<sup>11</sup> I have not spirits or courage enough to tap a paper-war, and what moderate abilities I may have had are not less decayed than my limbs, and the labour I have forced myself to take

5. Gray to Mason 7 June 1760 (*Gray's Corr.* ii. 672-6), printed in garbled form in Mason's *Mem.* Gray 283-6 and discussed ante 3 April 1775.

6. Mitford, 'dictator for to'; emended by Mrs Toynbee.

7. 'Hence, hence! thou haggard fiend, however called,

Thin, meagre genius of the bare and bald;

Thy spade and mattock here at length lay down,

And follow to the tomb thy fav'rite Brown;

Thy fav'rite Brown, whose innovating hand

First dealt thy curses o'er this fertile land'

(*The Landscape*, Bk i. ll. 283-8).

Similar allusions to Lancelot Brown's theories of landscape gardening occur in Bk ii. l. 83 and note and Bk iii. l. 27 and note.

8. Knight in a note to Bk ii. l. 310 of *The Landscape* argues that a 'uniform

principle of grace and elegance . . . prevailed in all the works of Greece and her colonies' and as an illustration reproduces (facing p. 39) a rough drawing of a 'small brass cup . . . of that plain and cheap kind, which could only have been meant for the common use of the common people. . . . But in the little specimen of ancient manufacture here given, all is in harmony and unison: the oblique line of the bottom corresponds with that of the top; the handle bends forward in the same direction with the spout' (pp. 38-9).

9. Probably Mrs Damer, who gave a bust of herself to Knight with an affectionate inscription to her 'old friend' (Percy Noble, *Anne Seymour Damer: A Woman of Art and Fashion 1748-1828*, 1908, p. 82).

10. HW lent Knight a bronze of Ceres, which was engraved for his *Worship of Priapus*, 1786; doubtless Knight replied with one or more courtesies.

11. HW had passed his seventy-eighth birthday the previous October.

to make this second page more legible than the first, which my poor fingers from such long disuse had almost forgotten to do, tells me how very helpless I am and how unfit to engage in a controversy of any kind. In fact repose without pain and a tranquil end is all I dare to wish, though pain I fear I must expect.

*You*, dear Sir, I would not divert from dethroning this usurper. I did ardently wish you had overturned and expelled out of gardens this new Priapus,<sup>12</sup> who is only fit to be erected in the Palais de l'Égalité.<sup>13</sup> But should you determine on a crusade against such infidels, I should rather wish you to employ your all-puissant arms, irony and ridicule. Your sonnet would imply anger and it is below your dignity to be provoked by this knight of the brazen milk-pot, who would be proud of having *you* for a serious antagonist. Indeed I doubt unless you make it ridiculous to read him, whether you may not help it off the bookseller's counter, where I hear it is likely to doze with other literati, till it takes its degrees in the university of waste paper.

Having been for three days carving this letter, which by extreme slowness and care I hope will not give you much trouble to decipher after the first page, which I scribbled with my ancient precipitation, till I found I could not read it myself, I will attempt no more at present, but to send you a parody on two lines of Mr Knight which will show you that his poem is seen in its true light by a young man of allowed parts, Mr Canning,<sup>14</sup> whom I never saw. The originals are the two first lines at the top of page 5:—

Some fainter irritations seem[s] to feel  
Which o'er its languid fibres gently steal.

KNIGHT

12. Knight's *Account of the Remains of the Worship of Priapus Lately Existing at Isernia . . . to which is added a Discourse on the Worship of Priapus, and its Connection with the Mystic Theology of the Ancients*, 1786, was published by the Society of Dilettanti. HW's copy (now wsl) was presented to him by a vote of the Society 'as an acknowledgment of the useful assistance received from him by the author in the prosecution of this work' (inscription on a fly-leaf by Sir Joseph Banks, the secretary of the Society). In the

preface to *The Progress of Civil Society* Knight defends himself (pp. xvi-xxi) against the charge of obscenity incurred by his *Priapus*.

13. The Palais-Royal, renamed Palais-Égalité during the Revolution.

14. George Canning (1770-1827) contributed a parody on Knight, from which the couplet is taken, to *The Anti-Jacobin* in 1797 (*Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin*, ed. Leonard Rice-Oxley, Oxford, 1924, pp. 58-65).

Cools the crimped cod, to pond-perch pangs imparts  
Thrills the shelled shrimps and opens oysters' hearts.

CANNING

However, I wish to see much superior wit and far superior and genuine poetry lanced at the head of this marauder, and in any case I flatter myself our correspondence will not close again while there is a finger left of, dear Sir,

Your sincere humble servant,

ORFORD

### From MASON, Thursday 24 March 1796

Printed from MS now wsl. First printed in Toynbee *Supp.* ii. 190-2. MS bequeathed by Mrs Damer to Sir Wathen Waller, 1st Bt; sold Sotheby's 5 Dec. 1921 (Waller sale), lot 40 (with Mason's letters to HW of 1 Aug. 1756 and 15 March 1796, and HW's letter to Mason of ca April 1778), to Maggs; offered separately in Maggs Cat. No. 425 (Summer 1922), lot 1474; bought by wsl from Maggs, March 1925.

Aston, March 24th, '96.

My dear Lord,

**I**T has given me extreme concern that the trifle I presumed to send you came to your Lordship at so improper a time. I can only say (what I do with strict truth) that I knew nothing of your late severe attack, and that from the late uncommonly temperate winter (hearing nothing to the contrary) I flattered myself that your old enemy, which I remember when I last had the honour of seeing you you said had become more placable, had not returned with such hostility. This, I trust, you will take as a sufficient excuse, though I cannot forgive myself when I find it has occasioned you to write a second letter with your own hand, which must have given you as much pain as it must and did give the reader pleasure to find that it was full as replete with your original vein of wit and humour as any I ever before received from you. I say not this to flatter you, a man in his 72 year cannot be supposed capable of flattering, with any effect at least, one

who is not above five years older.<sup>1</sup> But let this pass—we are both of us young enough (*absint superbiæ* on both sides) to cope with the wretch you have delineated, with two pencils joined in one, those of Hans Holbein and Salvator Rosa. But you do not choose to cope with him. Let that pass too— I hereby and by these presents excuse you from entering into a corps in which I own I had wished to have had the honour of enlisting you. And now let me apologize for my sonnet, about which if it ever was true that *facit indignatio versus*,<sup>2</sup> it is absolutely true concerning it. I writ it, in spite of its Petrarchian shackles, as quick as I should have written mere couplets. But I now on the next page send you a copy, so far reformed as to take it entirely to myself, and have only to beg and even insist that your Lordship should burn the original; which I think you will be the rather inclined to do, when I add that I mean to send a transcript of this last to our common friend the Bishop of London,<sup>3</sup> but without any mention that I ever sent it to your Lordship, to whom indeed the first copy was sent solely and exclusively, and this which I now send is copied from my first and only sketch. So that hereby you will perceive, that, if any bad hap betides, I am the only *galled jade* that can have occasion *to wince*, your *withers are unwrung*.<sup>4</sup> There is however one thing in your Lordship's last, that I cannot agree with you in. Irony and ridicule, supposing me possessed of those weapons even in a tenth of the degree you partially suppose, are not weapons to be employed on such a subject. I may perhaps not think it worth my while to employ either, but if I do, they must be of the *Ebro temper*,<sup>5</sup> that I think Othello speaks of. I must wield them as Hercules would a club to destroy hydras. I can only add at present that I beg you not to pain your hand to give me pleasure, but till it is more recovered to content yourself with believing me

Your Lordship's, most cordially,

W. MASON

1. HW was more than seven years older than Mason.

2. 'Indignation prompts the verses' (Juvenal, *Satires* i. 79).

3. Beilby Porteus. HW's intimacy with him began after the break with Mason.

4. 'We that have free souls, it touches

us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung' (*Hamlet* III ii. 252).

5. 'It is a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper' (*Othello* V. ii. 253). Pope in his edition read 'the Ebro's temper' (*Othello*, ed. H. H. Furness, Variorum Edition, 1886, p. 321).



MASON'S BOOK-PLATE





PS. I hope an expression which I have stolen from your excellent letter will not frighten you.<sup>6</sup>

### Sonnet

On hearing that the author of a thing in rhyme, called *The Landscape*, had written a more voluminous thing pretending to be a continuation or supplement to Mr Gray's fine fragment on the connection between education and civil government.

Old as I am, I still have powers to sneer  
 At him, who dares debase the gold of Gray  
 With his vile dross, and with such false allay  
 Hope to buy off the critic's frown severe.  
 He sings too!!— so, when twilight dims the sphere  
 The raven hoarse, blind owl, and mimic jay  
 Croaks, hoots and chatters near the flowery spray,  
 Where Philomel attunes her descant clear.  
 Methinks, I see my friend by Fancy's eye  
 Throned on a cloud in yonder azure plain,  
 'Smiling in scorn'; methinks, I hear him cry  
 'Prosaic poetaster! cease to drain  
 The filthy dregs of Epicurus' sty:  
 Thy hog-wash shall not mix with my champagne.'<sup>7</sup>

6. In the sonnet Mason borrowed from HW the phrase 'prosaic poetaster.'

7. HW apparently did not reply. He died 2 March 1797, and Mason the following 7 April, as the result of an injury to his shin. On 10 March Mason had written to Stonhewer concerning HW's death, 'I did not know it till the day before I

received yours of the 7th where he was mentioned as the late Lord Orford having left £1000 to the Duchess of Gloucester; as to his will, it is full as rational a one as anybody had reason to expect, and as to the bequest of his papers, the Miss B[erry]s or others are the fittest to have them' (Mitford ii. 373).



# APPENDICES



## APPENDIX 1

### WALPOLE'S QUARREL WITH MASON AND LORD HARCOURT

(1.) Walpole's account in *Walpoliana* i. 88-93, as told to Pinkerton in 1785.

'I shall tell you a great secret, the cause of my late difference with Mr Mason. Lord H., Mason, and I, used often to meet together, as we cordially agreed in our sentiments of the public measures pursued during this reign. But when the India bill of Fox came to be agitated, Mason took a decided part against it; nay, wrote to me that, upon this occasion, every one ought to assist the King; and warmly recommended it to me to use my influence in that cause.<sup>1</sup>

'You may imagine I was a little surprised at this new style of my old friend, and the impertinence of giving his advice unasked. I returned a light, ironical answer. As Mason had, in a sermon preached before the Archbishop of York, publicly declared that he would not accept of a bishopric, if offered to him, I jeeringly told him that I supposed his antipathy to a bishopric had subsided.<sup>2</sup> He being also the first promoter of the York associations [*sic*] (which I never approved), I added, that I supposed he intended to use that fool W[yvill] as a tool of popularity.<sup>3</sup> For W[yvill] is so stupid that he cannot even write English; and the first York association paper, which is written by W[yvill], is neither sense nor grammar.<sup>4</sup>

'To return to Lord H. He was so obnoxious to the Court that,

1. This and the following paragraph seem to point to a missing exchange of letters between HW and Mason in Dec. 1783 or Jan. 1784. But Mason's letter of 25 Dec. 1783 is a reply to HW's of 8 Nov., and Mason's of 28 Jan. refers to HW's of 30 Dec. as 'your last.' Moreover, in neither of HW's sets of notes and commentary on his letter of 2 Feb. 1784 does he mention an earlier exchange referring to Fox's India bill. Possibly HW, conversing with Pinkerton a year later, confused what he had actually written and what he had merely meditated writing to Ma-

son. HW's statement here, that Mason had urged him to oppose Fox's India bill, could have resulted from a faulty recollection of the condemnation of the coalition, a month after it had fallen, in Mason's letter of 28 Jan., the letter in which Mason also offended HW by expressing a wish for a 'new set' of 'Crown's friends.'

2. In HW's letter of 2 Feb. 1784.

3. The last reference to Wyvill in HW's letters to Mason, unflattering as usual, is in that of 14 March 1782.

4. HW is harking back to a remark he had made to Mason 22 March 1780.

when his mother<sup>5</sup> lately died, the Queen did not send a message to his Countess, to say that she would call on her; though this be always done in etiquette to a countess, and as constantly refused. In consequence Lord and Lady H. never went near the Court. But when Fox's India bill came to the House of Lords, Lord H., probably by Mason's suggestions, remained to the very last of the question, and much distinguished himself against it.<sup>6</sup> The consequence was, that, a few days after, Lord H. called on me, to say that the King had sent him a message, requesting his acceptance of the embassy to Spain:<sup>7</sup> and he concluded with begging my advice on the occasion. I told him at once that, since the King had sent such a message, I thought it was in fact begging pardon: "and, my Lord, I think you must go to Court, and return thanks for the offer, *as you do not accept it.*" But lo and behold! in a day or two Lady H. was made lady of the Bed-chamber<sup>8</sup> to the Queen; and Lord H. was constantly dangling in the Drawing-Room.

'Soon after Mason, in another letter,<sup>9</sup> asked me what I thought of Lord H.'s becoming such a courtier, etc. I was really shocked to see a man, who had professed so much, treat such a matter so lightly; and returned a pretty severe answer.<sup>10</sup> Among other matters, I said ironically, that, since Lord H. had given his cap-and-dagger ring to little master, he (Mason) need no longer wonder at my love for my bust of Caligula. For Lord H. used formerly always to wear a seal-ring, with the cap of liberty between two daggers, when he went to Court: but he gave it to a little boy upon his change. And I, though a warm friend of republicanism, have a small bust of Caligula in bronze, much admired for its fine workmanship.

'The consequence of these differences has been, that we call on each other, but are on the coldest terms.

'I ought to have mentioned that Mr Mason, in his latter epistle to me, condoled with me on the death of my brother, by which I lost £1400 a year. In my answer I told him there was no room for condolence in the affair, my brother having attained the age of

5. A mistake (probably Pinkerton's) for 'father': see HW's 'Explanation' appended to *ante* 2 Feb. 1784.

6. Apparently not, however, taking an active part in the debates (Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xxiv. 122-96).

7. A letter of 27 Dec. 1783 from Lord

Carmarthen, secretary of state, to Harcourt, offering him the embassy, is printed in *Harcourt Papers* viii. 340-1.

8. Not until 7 Aug. 1784 (*ante* 2 Feb. 1784, n. 47).

9. *Ante* 28 Jan. 1784.

10. *Ante* 2 Feb. 1784.

seventy-seven, and I myself being an old man of sixty-eight, so that it was time for the old child to give over buying of baubles. I added, that Mr Mason well knew that the place had been twice offered to me for my own life, but I had refused, and left it on the old footing of my brother's.

'Mason too has turned a kind of a courtier, though he was formerly so noted, that, being one of the King's chaplains, and it being his turn to preach before the royal family, the Queen ordered another to perform the office. But when this substitute began to read prayers, Mason also began the same service. He did not say whether he proceeded; but this I had from his own mouth; and as it happened in the chapel at St James's, it is surprising the town did not know it. Mason in consequence resigned the chaplainship.<sup>11</sup>

'Mason has six or eight hundred a year, arising from a living to which he was presented by the Earl of Holderness,<sup>12</sup> and from his York prebend. In my last letter to him, I asked if supernumerary church-offices were not among the articles of Mr Pitt's reform?<sup>13</sup> I do think that Mason changed his sentiments from a silly hope of seeing his favourite scheme, of Parliamentary reform, prosper in Mr Pitt's hands, but which that giddy boy afterwards so notoriously juggled. I nevertheless must regard the change as flat apostasy, for Pitt was then acting in formal opposition to the constitution of his country, being the only minister who ever withstood the House of Commons.'

(2.) Walpole's draft of a letter to Mason, ca 1 Feb. 1784.

Printed from MS now wsl, bought from the estate of Richard Bentley in 1937. First printed in *Letters of Horace Walpole . . . to Sir Horace Mann . . . Concluding Series*, ed. John Wright, 1843-4, iv. 315-8; printed also in Cunningham viii. 460-2 and Toynbee xiii. 130-2. HW has jotted three lines of memoranda at the top of the first page:

Ld Denbigh.  
will arise, I cd prophesy the contrary.  
Ld ?Egm. Mrs Clive.

The first two lines refer to Mason's letter of 28 Jan. 1784; the third is unexplained. There is also an endorsement, probably by Mary Berry: 'To Mason: quarrel on politics.'

11. In August 1772 (*ante* 17 May 1772, n. 2). This explanation of his resignation has not been found elsewhere.

12. Mason held two Yorkshire livings

from Holderness: Aston and Langton-upon-Swale.

13. There is no such remark in HW's letter of 2 Feb. 1784.

This draft was presumably discarded in favour of the more temperate letter of 2 Feb. 1784.

YOU must blame yourself not me if you are displeased with my letters, which you forced from me.<sup>1</sup> I had done all I could both by silence and by more than once or twice declaring I did not choose to write on politics, to avoid any political discussions with you. I could not be ign[orant] of Lord Har[court]'s conversion which for a moment had so much diverted the town, but I did not take the liberty to mention it to him. On the contr[ary] when he consulted me on going to Court, which I knew he had determined to do, on being offered the emb[assy] to Sp[ain,] I told him I thought civility ought to be returned by respect. Neither was I quite ignorant of your change of sentiments, yet should never have uttered a syllable to you on that occasion, had you not chosen to notify it to me. Then I most certainly had an equal right to declare that my principles were not changed—especially not by a circumstance, serious indeed in itself, but ludicrous if it had produced such an effect on me, as to make me think the power of the Crown was diminished, was diminishing and ought to be increased,<sup>2</sup> because its (not secret but open) influence had been used to force lords of the Bedch[amber] and even the holy head of our Church,<sup>3</sup> to sacrifice his conscience, duty and opinion to his gratitude—an example that tells me how much I have been in the right never to involve myself in such TERRIBLE obligations! *Ought* did not become you or me.<sup>4</sup>

I am so far from being hurt at your quarrelling with me, that I thank you extremely for it, and still so cordially wish you whatever you may wish for yourself, that I should delight in seeing you A[rch-bishop] of Y[ork], for as you are excellent at distinctions, you can cer-

1. HW apparently means his letters of 8 Nov. and 30 Dec. 1783.

2. A parody of Dunning's motion of 6 April 1780 (*ante* 7 April 1780).

3. John Moore (1730–1805), Bp of Bangor 1775–83, Abp of Canterbury 1783–1805. 'One circumstance might be thought suspicious, that the Archbishop, who is understood to be a warm supporter [of Fox's bill], and who I know has the Bishop of London's proxy for that purpose, was sent for to the King either yesterday or this morning' (William Windham to Lord Northampton [12] Dec. 1783, *The Windham Papers*, 1913, i. 56–7). On 17 Dec. the

Archbishop voted against the bill, and Bishop Lowth's proxy was cast against it (*The Parliamentary Register . . . House of Lords*, vol. xiv, 1784, pp. 107–8).

4. Apparently a reference to the particular sentence in Mason's letter that hurt HW the most deeply, and that he interpreted as an attempt by Mason to convert him to his own views: 'I think he [Harcourt] has shown himself the Crown's friend, which I hold to be a sort of friendship very different from Lord Denbigh's, and I rather think there will arise a new set of men under that title, at least there ought.'



tainly discover the difference between an archbishop and a bishop as easily as between a king and his crown. Rememb[er] Smelt whom you treated so harshly<sup>5</sup> for thinking [he] ought to rescue K[ing].

I am, Sir, with due regard and esteem,

Your most obedient humble servant.

I have for five and forty years acted upon the principles of the constitution as it was settled at the Revolution, the best form of government that I know of in the world, and which made us a free people, a rich people, and a victorious people, by diffusing liberty, protecting property and encouraging commerce, and by the combination of all empowering us to resist the ambition of the House of Bourbon, and to place ourselves on a level with that formidable neighbour. The narrow plan of royalty, which had so often preferred the aggrandizement of the Crown to the dignity of presiding over a great and puissant free kingdom, threw away one predominant source of our potency by aspiring to enslave America—and would now compensate for that blunder and its consequences, by assuming a despotic tone at home. It has found a tool in the light and juvenile son of the great minister who carried our glory to its highest pitch—but it shall never have the insignificant approbation of an old and worn out son of another minister, who though less brilliant, maintained this country in the enjoyment of the twenty happiest years that England ever enjoyed. Your pert and ignorant cabal at York, picking up factious slander from party libels, stigmatized that excellent man as the patron of corruption,<sup>6</sup> though all his views and all his notions tended to nothing but to preserve the present family on the throne, and the nation in peace and affluence. Your own blind ambition of being the head of a party, which had no precise system in view, has made you embrace every partial sound which you took for popularity; and being enraged at every man who would not be dictated to by your crude visions you have floundered into a thousand absurdities; and though you set out with pretending to reform Parl[iament] in order to lower the influence of the Crown, you have plunged into the most preposterous support of prerogative, because Lord North, then the Crown's minister, declared against your innovations, and has since

5. In *King Stephen's Watch* (see *ante* 17 Jan. 1780 and n. 1).

6. HW mentions this *ante* 14 March 1782.

fallen into disgrace with the King.—I am not so little rooted in my principles as to imitate or co-operate with you. I am going out of the world, and am determined to die as I have lived *consistent*. You are not much younger than I am, and ought to have acted a more temperate and rational part,—but that is no business of mine!

(3.) Walpole's notes on his quarrel with Mason.

The following memoranda, written on a scrap of paper found among the Bentley papers acquired by WSL in 1937, seem to be notes intended for expansion into an account of the quarrel. If they were so used, the MS has not been found.

Lord Shelburne

Mason did not care for reduction of cust[om] house officers, or commend it.

Lord Rock[ingham] demolished Association.

Mason, his broth[er-in-law], ordnance. D. of Richm[ond]. Gen. Hale.

He grew bent on altering elections. I advised him to stick to poetry.

Dr Johnson. Soame Jenyns.

(4.) Extracts relating to Walpole in the correspondence of Mason and Lord Harcourt, 1784–1794.

The following extracts, of which several from Mason's letters and all but one from Harcourt's are now first printed, are drawn from two sources:

(a.) Microfilms of Mason's letters to Harcourt, now in the possession of Lord Harcourt. Most of these letters, and of the extracts here given, are printed in *Harcourt Papers*, to which references are made. Where no reference is given it is to be understood that the extract is now first printed.

(b.) Photostats of Mitford's extracts from Harcourt's letters to Mason, Add. MSS 32563. The original letters have not been found. Mitford's extracts are mainly undated, and have been dated conjecturally or with reference to Mason's letters. Because of the ambiguities of Mitford's hand in these hasty transcripts there are a number of questioned words. Part of the entry dated March 1794 is in Mitford ii. 409; the others are now first printed.

Mason to Harcourt 26 Dec. 1784: 'I should like vastly to know

how Mrs Siddons comports herself in Mr Cumberland's *Carmelite*, and whether the *Carmelite* be as good as Mr Jacob's *caramel*;<sup>1</sup> this is not meant as a pun neither. God be thanked, the papers tell me enough of Dr Johnson's will and funeral.<sup>2</sup> But I am sadly at a loss for news since I lost my Strawberry-Hill Evening Post,<sup>3</sup> and I would almost commence a correspondence for *very, very* true intelligence, if it would not come to me in a more illegible hand than Lady Harcourt's' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 101).

Harcourt to Mason ca 1 Jan. 1785: 'You may well lament the loss of your late Evening Post, for as there is nothing like news in town, this would have been the time for him to have exerted his skill in political epigrams for your entertainment. Such mere matter-of-fact men as myself can only relate what we hear, whereas he has the talent of giving an air of importance to the most trifling and least uncommon occurrences, of persuading others (and himself I really believe also) of events the most improbable, and like the writers of memoirs and secret histories knows exactly everything that passes in a tête-à-tête between kings and their ministers or mistresses, queens and their favourites, and ladies of quality and their gallants. He has been very ill with the gout, but is now out of his bed, [and] though weak and faint, has his usual morning circle of *intimate friends*. I called on him the other morning and though I was not quite his *dearest*, or his *best* Lord, as formerly, I was well enough received, and as I had nothing to reproach myself with regard to him *I* was not the least embarrassed; whether he was so or not, I could not discover, yet he must suspect that I had heard of, if not seen the famous letter,<sup>4</sup> which was read to half the town and at Lord Rockingham's circle before it was sent to you, and with the contents of which I was well acquainted as soon, if not sooner, than yourself to whom it was addressed. *You* are not mentioned ever, nor any subject touched on which could lead to it. He showed me a beautiful drawing by that

1. Cumberland's *Carmelite*, written for Mrs Siddons, was first performed at Drury Lane 2 Dec. 1784 and was acted about thirteen times (Genest vi. 333). The joke about 'caramel' may refer to a confectioner or perhaps to the Harcourts' cook.

2. 20 Dec. in Westminster Abbey.

3. Mason had lost other London friends besides HW. He wrote to Alderson 5

March 1784, 'I lost so many friends such as the Bishop of Worcester etc. some years ago, by being averse to Lord North and his American war, and I have since lost so many more by detesting Charles Fox and his vile coalition with him, that there is hardly a visit I can make in London where I shall be graciously received.'

4. *Ante* 2 Feb. 1784.

imperious<sup>5</sup> friend and corruptress of her own sex,<sup>6</sup> L[ady] D[iana] B[eaucclerk]. It was a masquerade scene at Vauxhall<sup>7</sup> with two very lovely young women in half masques, sitting on a bench, a young lover at each extremity of it, and an old woman sitting on the ground, reading a ballad. This was the whole, and all I am persuaded the artist designed to represent, yet a long story was made out (or rather not made out) in the old style, of one of the young men being much more in love than the other, of one of the females being a woman of strict virtue, the other an errant coquette, and infinite praise bestowed on the idea of making the old woman reading, as a *vulgar* artist would have represented her *watching*. The countenance and character of the bunches of lilac<sup>8</sup> came into my head, and I was ready to laugh' (Add. MSS 32563, fol. 109-11).

Mason to Harcourt 8 Jan. 1785: 'I scorn your words! I never lamented the loss of my Evening Post; I only said I had lost it. I am of old White's mind (a member for Redford in the Duke of Newcastle's time),<sup>9</sup> who said when Charles Townshend died,<sup>10</sup> "Well! we have lost our champagne, but I can drink port"; so if your Lordship will supply me now and then with—no, not port, it is too English, but *vin de Bourbon*, and if Miss Fauquier will dash it with a little of her Nants,<sup>11</sup> I shall live very contentedly' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 102).

Mason to Harcourt 19 Jan. 1785: 'Porter in your teeth! your face! nay even your new Birthday<sup>12</sup> coat! I protest what you last sent me was genuine champagne. *Æil* (I can't make the right diphthong) *de perdrix, ma foi, véritable!* 'Tis true it was not of that spitfire sort that I have had from *another wine merchant*, in which I always suspected a considerable dash of perry, but it sparkled in the glass, had a fine relish, and did not get into one's nose, as the other did. But re-

5. MS doubtful; possibly 'injurious.'

6. Obscure; she had been divorced by her first husband, Lord Bolingbroke.

7. It was sold SH xvii. 35 to Lt-Col. George Lionel Dawson-Damer, and in 1903 was in the possession of his great-grandson, the 6th E. of Portarlington (Mrs Stuart Erskine, *Lady Diana Beauclerk*, 1903, p. 250; GEC).

8. Apparently an allusion to HW's description of Lady Diana's room painted with lilacs, *ante* 4 Aug. 1782.

9. John White (ca 1700-69), M.P. East Retford 1733-68 (*Members of Parliament*, pt ii, 1878, pp. 65, 129; Burke, *Peerage*, 1953, p. 2222; information kindly supplied by Dr Gerrit P. Judd).

10. 4 Sept. 1767; he was M.P. Yarmouth 1747-61, Harwich 1761-7.

11. Brandy (OED sub 'Nantz').

12. The Queen's Birthday, celebrated 18 Jan., although it actually fell on 19 May.

member, my order was not for champagne. I cannot afford to pay for it' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 104).

Mason to Harcourt 2 Feb. 1785: 'I am surprised *you* should mistake what I said about genius; God forbid I should be so unthankful to Providence as either to suppose or even to say that I had no particle of that divine spark. I only said that I had often palmed versification upon the world for it, and that it passed for current; and so I have often done, as you well know. I won't refer you to my *Evening Post* or my *Wine Merchant* for a proof of this, because you well know also who it is that thinks Gray's *Long Story* a greater proof of genius than either his *Odes* or his *Elegy*'<sup>13</sup> (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 105, through 'as you well know').

'Your Lordship says that you suspect Mr W. is not likely to live long; should he die, I must rely on your friendship and press you to be strongly active in getting my letters, etc., from Lady Walgrave, who I have good reason to think will be his heiress in chief.<sup>14</sup> He told me two years ago that he had carefully parcelled all his letters and left in his will they should be sent to the *living* writers of them.<sup>15</sup> I hope this will be conscientiously performed whenever he dies. But I write now to urge this great favour from you. I assure you I shall esteem it a weighty one, for the letters I writ him were generally the worst I ever writ; the *verve* never flowed freely, and besides this, you know many of the subjects must have been such as one would wish should not be made in any sort public, at least before I was dead too' (ibid. vii. 106).

Harcourt to Mason ca Feb. 1785: 'Your Wine Merchant, whom I have seen once since I wrote last, is nearly well again and in such

13. It is unlikely that HW ever expressed this preference seriously, although there is evidence that he thought well of the *Long Story*. Mason perhaps had HW in mind when he wrote in the *Memoirs* concerning the *Long Story*, 'Nothing could be more various than the opinions concerning it; by some it was thought a masterpiece of original humour, by others a wild and fantastic farrago' (*Mem. Gray* 211).

14. HW left SH and its contents to Elizabeth Laura, Lady Waldegrave, or her heirs after the death of Mrs Damer, the residuary legatee.

15. 'I do request that all such manuscript letters which shall be in my possession at my death that shall not concern or relate to my estate or effects and shall be written by any person who shall be living at that time may be returned to the person or persons by whom the same were written' (HW's will). Mason wrote to Stonhewer 10 March 1797, referring to HW's death and will, 'I would not demean myself or any of my friends to solicit for my own letters, etc., so I let that subject rest' (Mitford ii. 373). A month later Mason too was dead, and his letters remained among HW's papers.

good spirits that there is no immediate prospect of your losing him, but should that event happen before my own departure, you may depend on my acting in the manner you recommend, and should his house and fortune be left as he has told both you and I [*sic*] in the days of our favour he intended to do, you may be assured of every line of your writing being returned to you; for there are not two more honourable or strictly conscientious persons existing than Lord and Lady W[aldegrave]. I found the above-mentioned Merchant surrounded with all the female wits of the *Veseyan* school, with the old *philosophe* herself at the head of them, who, poor old soul, having never I suspect had much sense, is grown more curious as she is grown more deaf, and after requiring you to repeat every trifling sentence you utter, mistakes and then misquotes you at the next house she goes to' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 103-4).

Harcourt to Mason ?ca 1784-5: 'Mr Walpole is much better. I think I may say, well: for he has twice taken the air with Tonton. But tonight being the Gloucester House ball and supper, he will not be in perfect health till tomorrow' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 106).

Mason to Harcourt 13 March 1785: 'Lord S[trafford] tells me my late Wine Merchant has had a relapse. I don't doubt he lighted up, but poor Lady Mary on the opposite side<sup>16</sup> I hear suffered by many panes.<sup>17</sup> I spell it right, I don't mean pains, for I know she has the fortitude of a martyr.'

Harcourt to Mason ?ca 1785: 'Last time I saw your Wine Merchant, his wine was ?violently over-iced' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 101).

Harcourt to Mason ?ca 1785: 'I hear (*vive la caprice*) that your late Wine Merchant seems inclined to serve me again and furnish me with his most sparkling champagne. He must do as he likes best, for I shall neither humbly solicit the favour, nor haughtily reject his advances, should he think my custom worth having' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 111).

Harcourt to Mason ?1785: 'Your Wine Merchant, who is lately

16. Of Berkeley Square.

17. 'On Friday night [4 March] several streets in . . . Westminster were illuminated on account of Mr Fox's election for that city' (*Daily Adv.* 7 March 1785). The illumination, accompanied by rioting, was resumed 7 March, when Lady Mary Coke wrote in her journal, 'I went to Lady

Egremont's and while I was there they sent me word that they were breaking my windows.' On 8 March she added, 'All my windows excepting one on the ground floor are broke; 'tis melancholy to see what this country is come to' (Lady Mary Coke, MS Journal).

recovered from a fit of the gout, is in high health and spirits, and looks less shy on me than he did, though we do not visit more frequently than we did last year, nor am I yet *his best Lord*, as I used to be. He told Lord H[ertford?] that he was resolved to go to Nuneham next summer, even if he was carried thither. Your name is never pronounced by him, though I p[un]kindly mentioned it by way of experiment' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 101).

Harcourt to Mason ?1785: 'I saw your Wine Merchant two days ago. My visits are neither frequent nor long, and are paid with all the civil insincerity of ?wor[l]dly manners, which after all is much better and less troublesome than quarrelling. I used to call on him once or twice a week, but now I do not go oftener than once in a month or six weeks. The mention of your name is still cautiously avoided by him and I have heard no hint of any intended invitation to *Caprice Hill*, therefore my favour, you may be sure, is not very great and I have not much reason to triumph over you on that score' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 104).

Mason to Harcourt 3 Oct. 1785: 'Your Lordship . . . has of late . . . had such an exuberance of epistolary materials that I almost wonder you could prevent your pen from breaking through all etiquette and writing me two letters for one. I have known better days when I took in the *Berkeley Square* Evening Post, but those golden days, alas! have been long over, and I am now reduced to the idea maintained by the common people to think nothing true but what is in print because I can only read what is in print, and perhaps with regard to truth and falsehood I am on the whole no great loser. Be this as it may, I feel I have lost much entertainment.'

Harcourt to Mason ?ca 1785: 'I have not seen your late Gazetteer since I wrote last. I do not design to quarrel with him, but I wish him to see that his *very best Lord* is not pleased with his female flippancies, and therefore my visits will hereafter be less frequent than formerly. I know he is not in spirits, which makes me think he does not flatter himself with the hopes of soon seeing Mr Fox in the place of Mr Pitt' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 102-3).

Mason to Harcourt 26 Dec. 1785: 'There is a strange book published by a feigned name of Mr Heron,<sup>18</sup> full of the absurdest taste and pre-

18. *Letters of Literature*, 1785, published under the pseudonym 'Robert Heron, Esq.' by John Pinkerton (1758-

1826), antiquary and historian, and the compiler of *Walpoliana*. HW's correspondence with him is in CHATTERTON 251-328.

tence to learning that ever was written. I asked if he [Boswell] knew the author. He says he is a Scotchman called Pinkerton, who lives at Knightsbridge; that Mr W. has taken prodigiously to him, and has him frequently at Strawberry Hill. I cannot conceive this possible. Pray try to find out the truth' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 111-2).

Harcourt to Mason ca Jan. 1786: 'I have not received letter, note, nor even message from your late W[ine] Merchant during the time I have passed here, but I hear that he is still confined by the most severe and dangerous attack of the gout he has ever had, that he has been obliged to have the chalk-stones cut out of the flesh, and that the pain of the operation occasioned a swelling and alarming inflammation in one of his arms. How can you be surprised that he should have taken a fancy to the "author of Letters of Literature," but I am surprised that you should be so at anything he can do. Has he not in one of his books paid the highest compliment to the Scotch nation<sup>19</sup> that it ever received, and did he not afterwards absolutely take such an aversion to it, as hardly to endure the sight of any man born north of the Tweed? The Scotch fit is come in again, that is all, and our turn may come next, though he deigned not to mention either of our names, nor appear to be acquainted with us, when being talked of last winter.<sup>20</sup> The world, or at least some part of it, I am told, supposed him to be the author of the strange letters of *Mr Heron*, for anybody who either knows your Wine Merchant or is capable of understanding his works cannot but have observed his *rat[h]er* affected singularity of never approving what others approve, and in that observation their judgment was formed,<sup>21</sup> without distinguishing the difference between the coarse Johnsonian arrogance of the Scotchman, and the epigrammatic brilliancy, or if you like it better flippancy, of the Berkeley Evening Post' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 106-7).

Harcourt to Mason ca Jan. 1786: 'I have seen your Wine Merchant, who looks well and is recovering fast. He received me graciously, nay almost kindly, which was more than I expected, after having been told that his coldness, when either my place or myself was mentioned, was so marked as to be noticed by those who are not

19. 'The most accomplished nation in Europe' (*Royal and Noble Authors, Works* i. 492). See HW to Robertson 18 Jan. 1759, DALRYMPLE 41 and n. 1.

20. The meaning of the latter part of this sentence is not clear.

21. Among other eccentricities, 'Mr Heron' depreciates certain classical authors, including Virgil, a judgment with which HW agreed (HW to Pinkerton 26 June 1785, CHATTERTON 268-9).



apt to notice such things. To be sure, he did *be-Lordship* me as if I had been a bishop or new-made peer, but he gave me on quitting him Mons. le Duc de Nivernois's translation of the history of modern gardening.<sup>22</sup> This is ?prime!—and when will *you* receive another present from him? He did not mention Mr Heron, alias Pinkerton, but I have heard the ?petty particulars of this intimacy, which I find is only a summer friendship and that, though the said Pinkerton is frequently at Sion<sup>23</sup> Hill, he is very seldom seen in B[erkeley] Square. My account says that some time since, but I know not when, a book was published on medals, which containing something bold and singular caught the fancy of your Merchant, who when he sent to Dodsley to purchase the book, inquired who was the author of it, to which inquiry [no] answer was given, but one day, when sitting alone at St[rawberr]y, an unknown name was announced, and in came a young redheaded Scot, who introduced himself by saying—"I am the man you inquired after, who wrote the book on medals."<sup>24</sup>—Thus ends my history and everything I know concerning the new favourite' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 108-9).

Mason to Harcourt 17 Feb. 1786: 'As staunch a monarchy man as my *Wine Merchant* thinks me, I am bold enough to say that the constitution can do without a Queen provided it has a King, and, therefore, if during the next generation we should have none, I know nobody that would be injured except ladies of the Bedchamber (I speak this with *all* submission to my Lady Harcourt), and maids of honour' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 115).

Mason to Harcourt 12 March 1786: 'I believe, when I talked of the maxims of M. de la Rochefaucault, I should rather have talked of the single maxim of my Wine Merchant's father, that "every man has his price," for this I verily believe is the leading one in that person's political code; but this will be better to be discussed in conversation than letter' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 115-6).

Harcourt to Mason ?ca April 1787: 'Your Wine Merchant, with

22. HW began to distribute copies of the translation Aug. 1785. Harcourt's name does not appear on HW's original list of recipients (Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 129; BERRY ii. 259-60).

23. Doubtless Mitford's slip for 'Strawberry.'

24. Although Pinkerton's *Essay on Medals* (published anonymously in 1784)

was the 'ticket which introduced' him to SH (Samuel Knight to Pinkerton 24 Oct. 1784, quoted in CHATTERTON 254 n. 6) Harcourt is not quite accurate in saying that Pinkerton's name was unknown to HW before the *Essay* appeared. Pinkerton offered through Dodsley to dedicate the *Essay* to HW; HW declined in a letter to Dodsley 8 Aug. 1784.

whom I am his *dear*, and shall be soon perhaps his *best* Lord, drew me into the scrape of reading two quarto volumes of Cunningham's *History* translated,<sup>25</sup> which to be sure is a grievous task, for anything so dull or so miserably written I never read' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 99).

Mason to Harcourt 23 May 1787: 'My advice . . . is that *the Knight of the Fancy Nose*, who came from Worcester, and *the Dame* with her hands so,<sup>26</sup> should hang over the chimney, and that the rest should be distributed in proper order between the windows, which, if they answer no other purpose, will save the expense of French glasses, and perhaps be as agreeable both to my Lord Leicester<sup>27</sup> and my Wine Merchant, though the latter enjoys the unique talent of blending Gothic and Chinese, French and English, Roman lachrymatories, German Teckel glasses, ivory crucifixes, Tuscan vases, etc., etc., etc., in one delectable whole' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 134).

Harcourt to Mason ca Sept. 1787: 'I, or rather the Sheldon maps,<sup>28</sup> have been honoured with a visit from your Wine Merchant, but he could not venture without a chaperon, and so he persuaded a neighbouring General<sup>29</sup> to go with him. They arrived between the hours of breakfast and dinner and returned after breakfast the following day, and I never saw him more at his ease than he appeared to be the whole time, nor more epigrammatic in his conversation.

'You shall hear how this visit came about. A most absurd, and I think the most impudent letter I ever saw, came from Lady Craven<sup>30</sup> who, I flattered myself, had dropped my correspondence and at last discovered that she and I had never been even on the foot of intimate acquaintance, oblig[ing] me at her request to write to your

25. *The History of Great Britain: from the Revolution in 1688 to the Accession of George I*, by Alexander Cunningham (1654-1737); translated from Cunningham's Latin by Dr William Thomson and published 28 March 1787. See HW to Buchan 11 Feb. 1787, DALRYMPLE 193-4 and nn. 2-3.

26. Mason here inserted a rough sketch in his letter.

27. 'The best amateur antiquary of his time' (DNB).

28. Sixteenth-century tapestry maps, which HW bought at the Sheldon sale in 1781 and presented to Lord Harcourt (CHATTERTON 195 n. 2; HW to Harcourt

1 Sept. 1787). HW came to see the room at Nuneham that Harcourt had designed especially for the tapestries.

29. Probably Conway, since HW expected to visit Park Place before going on the few miles to Nuneham (HW to Harcourt, loc. cit.).

30. Dated 12 Aug. 1787 (*Harcourt Papers* viii. 332-5) and written from the court of the Margrave of Anspach, whose mistress she had become and whom she later married. It contained an invitation to Lord and Lady Harcourt to become members of a 'very honourable' literary society that she had established at the court.

Merchant,<sup>31</sup> which I did with the utmost civility,<sup>32</sup> but with nothing more. This however produced an answer<sup>33</sup> sparkling as champagne, and warm and cordial as Tokay.—Some short time after came a short note,<sup>34</sup> of which every other word was *honour* and *Lordship*, and without a *dear* being tacked to the title of *Lord*, announcing his approaching arrival near Henley and his intention of paying his *respects* at Nuneham. Then followed the visit, and that again was followed by a note of inquiry<sup>35</sup> after Lady H. who had a cold, still more distant and formal than the former one, and as if it had been addressed to an acquaintance of yesterday.—The cold fits I can very easily comprehend, but this quick succession of heat and cold, is beyond my skill in mental maladies to account for' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 105-6).

Mason to Harcourt 17 Feb. 1788: 'However, printed it is,<sup>36</sup> and let either my Wine Merchant or Mrs Montagu decide its fate.'

Harcourt to Mason ?ca March 1788: 'What your Wine Merchant's opinion may be of the *Memoirs*<sup>37</sup> I know not, for I have not once heard him mention them, nor have I learnt from others what that opinion is. He is out and about again, after a short but severe fit of the gout, attended with considerable danger for some days' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 104).

Mason to Harcourt 14 March 1788: 'The commendation I have received of it [the sermon on the slave trade] from certain quarters make [*sic*] me suspect that they think it more courtly than I intended it to be. . . . I should be curious to know our Wine Merchant's opinion, but that seems impossible, for were any person in his best good graces to ask him, he would only reply "that he never read sermons."'

Harcourt to Mason ca March 1788: 'The last thing that I should have discovered in your sermon was that it was *courtly* over much, and it appears to me quite impossible that any other person should

31. 'I have little time to write, and therefore I beg you will inform Mr Walpole of this new academy, and tell him I shall insert his name near mine' (*Harcourt Papers* viii. 333).

32. Harcourt's letter is missing.

33. 1 Sept. 1787.

34. Missing.

35. Also missing.

36. *An Occasional Discourse, Preached*

*in the Cathedral of St Peter in York, January 27, 1788, on the Subject of the African Slave Trade.* By W. Mason, M.A. (Gaskell 34).

37. Presumably *Poems by William Whitehead, Esq. . . . Vol. III. To Which are Prefixed, Memoirs of His Life and Writings.* By W. Mason, M.A. It was published by March 1788 (Gaskell 34-5).

think of it differently from what I do.—As to getting at your Wine Merchant's opinion, that is a difficulty not to be overcome, as he never pronounces your name before me or any other of your friends. He and I are mighty civil, and almost kind when we meet, which is not so frequently by any means as formerly; he I think is ashamed of his behaviour to me, and has always been mortified that I would not quarrel with him, which had I really had much affection for him, I could not have avoided: *hurt* I certainly was at the time,<sup>38</sup> for injustice cannot but be painful in some degree, but by not putting myself in the ministry and by that conduct preventing many an epigram and many a squib that he would have been happy to have had an opportunity of firing for the amusement of his Loart,<sup>39</sup> and of other friends of the year—I have had my revenge' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 99–100).

Mason to Harcourt 31 July 1788: 'I left Mr Gibbon where your Lordship did, at his two first volumes, since which I have just dipped into the last, and will venture to assert that those who read them will read them more for the sake of the notes than the text, and I shrewdly suspect that most of our fine ladies will learn Greek for the purpose of relishing them completely. I should not wonder if my Wine Merchant immediately took down his picture of Lady Craven,<sup>40</sup> and put that of the Empress Theodora in her place as a lady of greater talents and a more inventive genius. Besides, an imperial w—— is so much more consequential, and so much more befitting the cabinet of an antiquarian virtuoso, that I think your Lordship should advise your dear friend immediately to adopt this idea' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 144–5).

Mason to Harcourt 31 Jan. 1790: 'When I arrived [at Aston] I found a letter from my wife's brother Mr Sherman, for whom through the mediation of my Wine Merchant<sup>41</sup> I some years ago got the place of storekeeper of the garrison at Hull by his application to the Duke of Richmond. Mr S. now wishes to be removed to the office of a like

38. Of Harcourt's return to Court at the end of 1783.

39. Or Lort (MS ambiguous). Michael Lort (1725–90), with whom HW corresponded from 1760 to 1790, is doubtless the person referred to, although HW's correspondence with him (CHATTERTON 137–228) is chiefly antiquarian.

40. By Romney; see *ante* ii. 45.

41. See the letters of 10 April–2 July 1782. Mason's efforts to have Sherman transferred to the Isle of Man were successful (*ante* 10 April 1782, n. 4).

kind in the Isle of Man. But as you well know, my former wine vaults are closed against me and perhaps were they open would now not serve my purpose.'

Mason to Harcourt 8 April 1790: 'I would wager a good sum, if I ever wagered at all, that Lady Harcourt is right in her surmises, I will not say of the author of the printed letter,<sup>42</sup> but at least of the press from whence it issued, from which it could not issue, unless the person by whose authority that press could only issue, gave it his imprimatur. And this I say without knowing more of its contents than your Lordship thought proper to give me and merely because it seems so like some other proceedings out of the same press, which though chiefly in the panegyrical way, have been always prompted by a zeal of the moment to please either *self*, or the person who wrote like *self*. For *myself* I am thankful I never had an offer of the use of that press even in the most cordial times.<sup>43</sup> As to the admission of dashes, I think that is no proof on your Lordship's side, for if a Lady of a certain sort was the authoress,<sup>44</sup> which is not impossible, he would venerate her dashes too much to venture at an alteration, nay would find that every dash conveyed an epigram. Still less founded is your argument taken from his not having shown any marks of displeasure, etc. For is he not a perfectly well-bred man, and what well-bred man ever did show marks of displeasure on such occasions? If I ever aspire to be a well-bred man, the first lesson I shall teach myself will be to appear the most pleased when I am the most displeased, and let me tell your Lordship in your ear that as well-bred a man as you think yourself, you have not as yet attained that summit of good breeding. But a Court may mend you, and therefore I will not lecture you

42. 'This alludes to a very ill-natured and unwitty anonymous letter addressed to Lady Harcourt upon Lord Harcourt's being appointed Master of the Horse to the Queen, of which the author sent copies to almost every person at Court, as well as to the two persons who were the objects of this attack.—Lady Harcourt having herself communicated the aforesaid letter to the Queen, and by that step defeated the intentions of the writer, a second anonymous epistle, written with additional spleen, but not with more wit than the preceding one, was circulated with equal assiduity, though it was not printed' (Har-

court's MS note). Neither the printed verse letter nor its MS sequel has been found. Harcourt seems not to have shared Lady Harcourt's and Mason's suspicions that HW was the author or printer.

43. This was untrue; HW offered his press to Mason repeatedly. See HW to Cole 10 Sept. 1771 (COLE i. 236) and *ante* 19 July and 23 Aug. 1774, 14 Feb. 1782, and 9 June and 22 Sept. 1783. He did not offer to print the political satires, for reasons given *ante* 4 June 1782.

44. Mason perhaps means Lady Craven, who was still abroad but with whom HW had corresponded.

more at present on that subject' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 176, from 'if I ever aspire').

Mason to Harcourt 15 April 1790: 'The sight and perusal of the letter only rivets my suspicions. The folio form seems to be adopted, like the dashes, merely to conceal from what press it issued, which before always dealt in quartos,<sup>45</sup> which size also, being most proper for epistolary conveyance, would surely have been adopted, but for this reason. As to internal evidence there is nothing I would much insist upon save the phrase '*peacock* vanity,' which is so heraldic<sup>46</sup> that I could almost swear to it. What is said of her Majesty at *present* etc. seems also very suspicious. Yet I do not from this infer that the person I suspect was the absolute author, I hold him only to be the corrector and reviser, retoucher and finisher. Were I to say how much farther my suspicions go, I know I should be scouted both by your Lordship and her Ladyship too, therefore I'll say no more about it, except that I think it was perfectly right to show it to the Queen, who, if she had not seen it before, would surely have seen it ere this, and therefore it was best to have it early communicated by her to whom it was addressed. I cannot however think that the advice she gave your Lordship was so prudent as it was *well-bred*. All that can be and ought to be done is to take as little notice of it as possible, for to show any degree of being hurt by it would only bring reiterated attacks from the same quarter, from whatever quarter this came. In one short word, it is next to impossible that any person of a rank much inferior to your Lordship's should escape these *wounds in the dark* who has changed at any time from a[n] anti-courtier to a courtier. The fact of changing is all that is regarded, the motives for change is [*sic*] never taken into consideration. Were I, even I, to appear either at St James's or the Minister's levee, I should expect the penny post would be loaded with anonymous letters in bad verse the next day. . . . I think it safer to return the enclosed letter, as well as this, by a private hand.'

Harcourt to Mason ?Dec. 1791: 'You may remember to have heard of two rather pretty but very conceited and very trumpery Misses<sup>47</sup> who make your Wine Merchant talk a great deal of nonsense, and who absolutely govern him. These Misses then, having, it seems,

45. And octavos. A broadside in folio is noted in Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 191.

46. The Harcourt crest is a 'peacock close.'

47. Mary and Agnes Berry.

been abused in the paper he takes in,<sup>48</sup> as wishing to take advantage of his weakness to the exclusion of his relations and old friends, the froth of his champagne almost burst the sides of the worn-out leathern bottle which contained it, he flew in a rage to these objects of his idolatry, said such treatment was no longer to be endured, told them he had the power of settling a good jointure, offered to *marry* either of them,<sup>49</sup> and rather pressed them to accept his offer, which however they wisely declined—you may depend upon this, as a fact' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 98-9).

Harcourt to Mason Feb. 1792: 'I have not seen your Wine Merchant, though he has waived his dignity and called upon me. That he is teased and tormented by lawyers and business which he does not understand, I can readily believe; but he has been very strange in his conduct lately respecting his *new* name,<sup>50</sup> for the old one still continues upon his door, and he is resolved not to have any armorial bearings upon his carriage. Our common friend (yet nobody knows why she would always fancy herself mine) the Margravine of Anspach<sup>51</sup> has written the *most charming* note in answer to his no less charming apologies<sup>52</sup> for not waiting upon the Margrave, and his S[erene] H[ighness] has made him a visit, and therefore though he knows what a dangerous woman she is, I conclude she is again introduced into his good graces' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 97).

Mason to Harcourt 20 Feb. 1792: 'I glory in my Wine Merchant's patriotic scorn of titles and supporters; I tried all I could, when Palgrave was with me at York, to make him send his chaise to the coach painters to blot out his mantle (which we all know he had never any right to encircle his quartering withal), but to no purpose, and quoted his Lordship's example (I beg his pardon for calling him so) in vain. When he [Palgrave] comes to town pray turn him over to the Margravine, and let her Serene Highness make him her chaplain' (*Harcourt Papers* vii. 192).

48. The abuse has not been found. HW's and Mary Berry's correspondence on the subject, Dec. 1791, is in BERRY i. 375-8.

49. Similar stories of a double proposal to the Berrys continued to be repeated for a half-century after HW's death. Charles Greville in 1843 reported

that Mary Berry then denied it (BERRY i. pp. xxiii-iv).

50. HW had succeeded as 4th E. of Orford on his nephew's death, 5 Dec. 1791.

51. After her husband's death in 1791 Lady Craven had married the Margrave of Anspach.

52. This exchange of letters is missing.

Mason to Harcourt 6 March 1794: 'It seems the town is busy in reading a didactic poem on landscape,<sup>53</sup> and Stonhewer tells me that Lord Orford has censured it in his best epigrammatic manner. . . .'

Harcourt to Mason March 1794: 'Lord Orford has been very ill, and the gout affected his spirits more, I am told, than ever it had done before, but now he is nearly well again. I have seen him once and but once, though I am no longer ill at that court, and of course he talked to me of *Mr Knight's poem*, which is indeed a poor, yet pompous nothing, and I am quite vain, that without ever having seen him, or heard what he had said about it, I should have stumbled upon the very same expressions when I returned it to the person who lent it to me, namely, that *it was a didactic poem without poetry and which taught nothing*. There is but a small part of this unpoetical poem which treats of the subject you expect from its title, and that little is sufficient to show that he does not understand it. The abuse of *Brown* is as coarse and illiberal as it is cruel and unjust' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 97-8; the latter part of the extract, from 'of course he talked,' is printed in Mitford ii. 409).

Harcourt to Mason ?March 1794: 'I have not seen your old Wine Merchant since the first visit, but hearing he had relapsed, I called today at his door to make civil inquiries, and heard that he was very indifferent. I suspect he is going' (Add. MSS 32563 fol. 99).

53. By Richard Payne Knight. See *ante* 22 March 1796.



## APPENDIX 2

### WALPOLE'S ADVERTISEMENT TO HOYLAND'S POEMS, 1769

See *ante*, HW to Mason 5 April 1769, n. 5.

THIS small collection of poems, though meriting to be preserved for their ease and natural beauties, is published solely for the benefit of their author the Rev. Mr Hoyland, whom a train of misfortunes, too common to need enumerating, yet grievous enough to depress the best faculties, have reduced to extreme distress. The recommendation of a friend had procured for him a living in South Carolina, for which he was preparing to embark when this publication was projected, and by which it was hoped he and his family might secure some additional comforts in the new world to which he was going. But fortune had already been too severe. It was found that the vigour of his body and mind were not equal to the voyage. What therefore was meant to remove his misfortunes, has only been the cause of adding one disappointment more to the sum of them. This then being the case, it is hoped that nobody will blame a small increase in price for the following pages. A situation that deserves a tear, is surely not over-indulged by the gift of half a crown. This is the utmost largess that Mr Hoyland's friends ask, but not demand for him: for as he is too modest even to desire to be over-paid, they must not too much presume on the benevolence of the public.

## APPENDIX 3

### WALPOLE ON GARRICK'S ALTERATION OF *Hamlet*

See *ante*, HW to Mason 9 Jan. 1773, n. 6.

Printed from HW's 'Book of Materials' 1771 (now wsl), pp. 8-9, 63-4; first printed (privately) in *Notes by Horace Walpole on Several Characters of Shakespeare*, ed. W. S. Lewis, Farmington, Conn., 1940, pp. 5-7, 12-14.

IN 1773 [Dec. 1772] Mr Garrick produced his *Hamlet* altered, in which he had omitted the scene of the grave-diggers, from injudicious complaisance to French critics, and their cold regularity, which cramps genius. Objections made to that admirable scene of nature, is, that it is burlesque, unheroic, and destroys and interrupts the interest of the action, and diverts Hamlet from his purpose on which he ought only to think, the vengeance due to the murder of his father. Not one of these objections are true. If Garrick had really been an intelligent manager, he would have corrected the vicious buffoonery which lay in his actors, not in the play. The parts of the grave-diggers have long been played by the most comic and buffoon actors in the company, who always endeavoured to raise a laughter from the galleries by absurd mirth and gesticulations. The parts ought to be given [to them] who could best represent low nature seriously, and at most the jokes between the men themselves previous to Hamlet's entry might have been shortened, though those very jests are natural and moral, for they show that habit can bring men to be cheerful even in the midst of the most melancholy exercise of their profession. That the scene is not unheroic, though in prose, is [clear] from the serious remarks it draws from Hamlet. Is every low character inconsistent with heroic tragedy? What has so pathetic effect as the fool in *Lear*? in how many Greek and modern tragedies are the nurse, a shepherd, a messenger, essential to the plot? Mirth itself, especially in the hands of such a genius as Shakespeare, may excite tears not laughter, and ought to do so. The grave-digger's account of Yorick's ludicrous behaviour is precisely an instance of that exquisite and matchless art, and furnishes an answer too to the last objection, that the humour of the grave-digger interrupts the interest of the action and weakens the purpose of Hamlet. Directly the contrary; the skull of Yorick and the account of his jests could have no

effect but to recall fresh to the Prince's mind the happy days of his childhood, and the court of the King his father, and thence make him [see] his uncle's reign in a comparative view that must have rendered the latter odious to him, and consequently the scene serves to whet his *almost blunted purpose*. Not to mention that the grave before him was destined to his love Ophelia—what incident in this scene but tends to work on his passions?—O ignorance of nature, when the union of nature and art can make critics wish for art only! . . .

The scene of the grave-diggers in *Hamlet*, the finest piece of moral pathos that can be imagined, was sillily omitted by Garrick, because it had been generally acted in a buffoon manner, and because French critics, who did not understand it, condemned it as low. I have seen old Johnson<sup>1</sup> play the first grave-digger in the very spirit in which Shakespeare wrote it: he jested slightly with his companion before Hamlet entered, marking the insensibility that habitude produces in men accustomed to sights that shock or impress with melancholy those not broken to them—but when the Prince entered, Johnson resumed his seriousness to a certain degree, yet not so much as to destroy the stronger emotions of Hamlet. It was natural to a grave-digger to recall the wantonness of a young merry courtier, and recount it as he felt it—but to the Prince, it brought back reflection on the happy hours of his childhood, which he could not but compare with the dismal scenes that had ensued, and with his own present melancholy situation. In this just light the skull of his father's jester roused the indignation of Hamlet and egged him on to the justice he meditated on his uncle; and thus that rejected scene hastened on the catastrophe of the tragedy, and more naturally than the most pompous exhortation would have done from the mouth of Horatio. A spark falling on combustible matter may light up a conflagration. A great master produces important events from a trifle naturally introduced. A piddling critic would waste his time in describing the torch with dignity that set fire to the combustion. Compare Ben Johnson's *Catiline* with *Hamlet*. The former is all pedantry and bombast. Are the royal dignities of the Ghost, of the Queen or of Hamlet lowered by the variety of familiar incidents taken from common life that are introduced into the tragedy? The rules of Aristotle, of Bossu,<sup>2</sup> are ridiculous and senseless, if they prohibit such conduct

1. Benjamin Johnson (ca 1665–1742)  
acted at Drury Lane and the Haymarket.

2. René le Bossu (1631–80), author of a  
*Traité du poème épique*.

and operations of the passions. Is there an incident in all Racine, Corneille, Voltaire, Addison or Otway, so natural, so pathetic, so sublime, as Prince Arthur's reminding Hubert of his having bound a handkerchief wrought by a princess on the jailor's temples?<sup>3</sup> It is that contrast between royalty and the keeper of a prison that exalts both, and augments the compassion for Arthur. Dr Johnson has dared to say that when Shakespeare aimed at being sublime, he was bombast; that is, Johnson had no idea of sublimity but in the pomp of diction, and he himself in his common conversation is always hyperbolic and pedantic. He talks like Ancient Pistol, and is the very thing he condemns. Is there no sublimity in ennobling a vulgar image or expression? Voltaire did not know there is, any more than Johnson. The Frenchman condemns Hamlet's expression of *a bare bodkin*,<sup>4</sup> every Englishman of taste feels the happy energy of the phrase. I do not doubt but we lose many beauties in the ancients from not understanding the whole force of their language and allusions: but it would be the extremity of folly to sacrifice our glory, Shakespeare, to French critics, who undoubtedly cannot comprehend half his merit.

3. *King John* IV. i. 41-4. George Montagu refers to this passage in his letter to HW of ca 14 April 1761 (MONTAGU i. 356).

4. Voltaire disliked the third soliloquy but translated it twice, first freely and later literally (*Œuvres*, ed. Moland, xxii. 150-2). In the free translation 'Voltaire a éliminé

ce mot de *bodkin*, le jugeant probablement trop cru' (C. Serrurier, 'Voltaire et Shakespeare,' *Neophilologus*, 1920, v. 208). If he made a specific comment on the phrase (which he renders as 'simple aiguille' in the literal translation) it has not been found.

## APPENDIX 4

### WALPOLE'S DESCRIPTION OF STORER'S DELINEATOR,

1777

See *ante*, HW to Mason 21 Sept. 1777. The description must have been in part dictated by Storer, and in the absence of HW's original letter there is no assurance that Storer did not alter or add to it.

From William Storer's *Syllabus to a Course of Optical Experiments, on the Syllepsis Optica, or the New Optical Principles of the Royal Delineator Analysed*, [1782], pp. 18–21:

The following is a copy of a description of the Royal Patent Delineator, wrote by that high and justly distinguished noble character, as judge and patron of the arts, the Honourable Horace Walpole, and from whom I had the honour to receive it, to present to Sir Joshua Reynolds to correct, who was pleased to return it me, saying, it appeared to him to want no alteration.

#### The Delineator, an Instrument

that obviates the defects of the camera obscura, as it does not require the sun to shine on the objects represented, as it represents the objects erect, and neither inverted nor transversed; as it is equally fit to be used by candle-light as by daylight; as it delineates the human face of any size required, and consequently is of the greatest use to portrait painters; as it gives the insides of rooms and buildings in the utmost exactness, and their perspectives; and that the rooms in which it is employed need not be darkened; as it exhibits landscapes with the utmost truth, and even the foliage of trees, with the nicest precision.

This instrument will enable engravers to take drawings from pictures with infallible accuracy, and by it, not only the busts and vases may be taken in few minutes, but even the patterns on those vases or bas-reliefs may be copied as successfully.

The inventor is afraid of specifying too many properties of his discovery, and is rather desirous that the various uses to which it may be applied should speak its merit, and he shall feel more satisfaction in having the arts improved in his own country by this useful instru-

ment, than ambitious of personal fame. And lest any neighbouring nation should hereafter contest the improvement with England, he takes the liberty of specifying the era of the discovery.

The idea first occurred to the inventor, William Storer, of Saham Toney, near Swaffham in Norfolk, about the beginning of the year 1776, and was brought to its present stage of improvement in about eighteen months.

The instrument would not be offered to the public, if it had not the sanction of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr West, and other eminent professors.

Sir Joshua Reynolds is begged to correct this sketch as he thinks proper.

Sept. 19, 1777

HOR. WALPOLE

## APPENDIX 5

### MASON'S CONTINUATION OF AND PRELIMINARY NOTE TO THE EPISTLE TO WALPOLE, 1778

See *ante*, Mason to HW ca 25 August 1778.

Printed from photostat of Mitford's transcript in BM, Add. MSS 32563 fol. 95-6, headed by Mitford, 'Continuation of the Epistle to H. Walpole on Chatterton. (Aston MS.)' Printed in part in Mitford ii. 409-10. The portions between asterisks are now printed for the first time.

—Though Bristol born, had parts, by all agreed,  
To make a bonny lad beyond the Tweed,  
Who thence translated by the royal nod  
Might change in Pharaoh's court like Aaron's rod,  
Curl round the closet, lift its ruby crest,  
A sly, sleek serpent swallowing all the rest.

Oh! let me, ravished with a thought so new  
Give to the jury in prophetic view  
A glimpse of what the stripling might have been  
If not frost-nipped by the defendant's spleen.  
Yes! let me place in full meridian light  
Visions that burst upon my second sight,  
That second sight which many a Scot possesses,  
Heaven's gift—as *rambling Johnson* half confesses.<sup>1</sup>

\*I see! I see the years auspicious roll!  
Crowd not so quick, good years, upon my soul,  
When the wise youth a better business chooses,  
And scorns to be the swindler of the Muses.  
Ah! what is this? a volume bound in wood  
With leathern thongs as ancient as the flood.

1. 'To collect sufficient testimonies [of second sight] for the satisfaction of the public, or of ourselves, would have required more time than we could bestow. There is, against it, the seeming analogy of things confusedly seen, and little understood; and for it, the indistinct cry

of national persuasion, which may be perhaps resolved at last into prejudice and tradition. I never could advance my curiosity to conviction; but came away at last only willing to believe' (*A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, 1775, p. 256).

See, it expands the antiquarian stare.  
Did ever mortal boast a prize so rare?

'Letters so black, so broad, so deep indented,  
This proves past doubt, that printing was invented  
Some ages prior to the vulgar date,  
But where to fix it may again debate.  
Proof from itself, most vainly we might seek,  
Each type is so illegibly antique.'\*

### Preliminary Note.

\* Before the reader takes this little poem into his hands, he ought to make himself acquainted with the very singular history of Thomas Chatterton, for which he is referred to a note in the 7 page of the Preface to a book [ed. Tyrwhitt, 1777] entitled 'Poems Supposed to have been Written at Bristol by Thomas Rowley and others in the 15 century.'\* He ought also to be informed that in a later publication of the works of Thomas Chatterton,<sup>2</sup> an anonymous person charged Mr Walpole with treating that author contemptuously; and invited the world to feel indignation at a person who could refuse his patronage to a poor youth of such uncommon abilities. This undeserved accusation led Mr W. to draw up a short narrative of his own behavior on that occasion, which he intended to publish.<sup>3</sup> This gave rise to the following Epistle.

2. Chatterton's *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*, ed. John Broughton, 1778. See ante 24 July 1778.

3. *A Letter to the Editor of the Miscel-*

*lanies of Thomas Chatterton* was printed at SH in Jan. 1779 and distributed privately (Hazen, *SH Bibliography* 116-g; see also CHATTERTON 174 n. 7, 348-50).



## APPENDIX 6

### FITZPATRICK'S PARODY OF SELWYN'S ADVERTISEMENT

From *London Courant* 25 April 1780. See *ante*, HW to Mason 25 April 1780.

For the London Courant.

A late Electioneering Advertisement versified.

To the free and independent Electors of Gloucester.

Gentlemen,

Since Parliament thinks my Lord North in the wrong,  
A rumour prevails that it cannot live long;  
So I thank you for favours received heretofore,  
And humbly solicit those favours once more.

Not having *myself* any cause to complain  
Of the happy events of this prosperous reign;  
Devoted as I am to Church and to King,  
And conceiving no change a desirable thing,  
I grieve that it e'er should be deemed a disgrace  
To a dutiful subject to hold a good place,  
And would fain to *your* minds, as is very well known,  
Reconcile it as well as I do to *my own*.

My fortune and life I would sooner lay down,  
Than give up the people's true rights to the Crown:  
(Let the worthy electors of Ludgershall<sup>1</sup> say,  
If they ever yet heard that *I gave them away*.)

Now I know of no right so essential to man  
As the right of *acquiring* whatever *he can*;  
And with ministers driving a bargain that's good,  
I conceive to be liberty *well understood*—  
These rights to the day of my death I'll maintain,  
And still your consistent old servant remain.

G—e A—st—s S—w—n.

Richard Fitzpatrick's parody was originally sent, probably by Lord Carlisle, to Robert Raikes, publisher of the *Gloucester Journal*, with the

1. Ludgershall, the Wiltshire borough in which Selwyn held the nomination of the two members.

following letter (printed with the verses in J. H. Jesse, *George Selwyn and His Contemporaries*, 1843-4, iv. 320-1):

Sir,

April 21st, 1780.

As an impartial printer and publisher, I make you a present of a copy of verses made by Mr Fitzpatrick, which I request may be printed in your next journal, under the advertisement of Mr George Selwyn. I should not venture on this request, had not Mr Selwyn himself read them to a number of people at a public table after supper at Brookes's in St James's Street; and he thought them so good and just, that he exerted on the occasion his known humour and talents, which highly entertained the multitude, as well as

Your most obedient,

LOVEWIT

Selwyn's advertisement, as printed in the *Public Advertiser* 15 and 17 April 1780, reads:

'To the worthy freemen of the city of Gloucester.<sup>2</sup>

'Gentlemen,

'As a rumour has prevailed, how well founded I know not, that there will be, in the course of a few months, a more sudden dissolution of the present Parliament than was to be expected, permit me to present you with my most sincere and hearty thanks for the long continued marks which I have received of your friendship and support, and to entreat once more the favour of your votes and interest to serve you in the next Parliament.

'Devoted as I am to the present happy establishment in Church and State, it gives me great concern to find, that I cannot reconcile to the minds of every one of my constituents, the possibility of being a dutiful subject, and servant to his Majesty, and at the same time be independent, especially as I can, with the most unfeigned truth, assure you all, that I would sacrifice both my life and fortune, rather than give a sanction, by one vote of mine, to what I thought an encroachment of the Crown upon the true rights and well-understood liberties of the people.

'I am, gentlemen, with a due sense of all your former favours, and the utmost respect, your very humble servant,

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN.'

2. Selwyn was M.P. for the city of Gloucester 1754-80.

## APPENDIX 7

### GRAY'S VERSES ON LORD SANDWICH

See *ante* 16 Sept. 1774. There is an earlier undated printing of Gray's verses on a quarto half-sheet, which was assigned to the SH Press by Leonard Whibley in TLS 21 Aug. 1930. On this subject Mr Hazen has written to us:

'Although in the *SH Bibliography*, pp. 212-4, I accepted Mr Whibley's arguments somewhat doubtfully, I would prefer to say now that this separate printing of *The Candidate* is probably not from the SH Press. No conclusive new evidence has been discovered, but when all the evidence is reassessed, I find it difficult to accept *The Candidate* as a SH piece.

'HW certainly implies in his letter of September 1774 that he has no present plan to print the poem, and the doubts expressed in the *SH Bibliography* seem hard to brush aside. No copy was in the Barrett, Bull, Cole, or Kirgate collections of SH pieces, and no copy was in HW's own set of Detached Pieces now at Farmington. The presence of copies at Eton in the Storer Collection (made after 1790) was Mr Whibley's chief argument for SH printing, but the argument is not a strong one: several pieces in that collection are only slightly associated with HW, and were not printed at SH.

'No watermark is visible in four copies (each a half-sheet) examined for me, although HW used watermarked paper at his Press almost without exception. I have seen no copy myself, but the Headmaster of Eton, Dr Richard Birley, who is a student of the SH Press, does not believe *The Candidate* was printed there: the press-work is unlike Kirgate's but rather like that of General Conway's *Elegy on the Death of Miss Caroline Campbell* [1789] (not printed at SH, but see *SH Bibliography*, p. 145).

'From present knowledge I suggest that HW made one or more manuscript copies in 1774, and that from one of these the *London Evening Post* derived its text in 1777; the separate printing was more probably prepared in London, very possibly as late as 1787.'



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